United Nations A/63/735

General Assembly

Distr.: General
23 February 2009

Original: English

**Sixty-third session**
Agenda item 121
**Pattern of conferences**

# Action taken to improve the timely submission of documents for the Fifth Committee

## Report of the Secretary-General

*Summary*

The present report is submitted in response to General Assembly resolution 63/248, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to address the problem concerning documentation considered at the second resumed session of the Fifth Committee. It contains information on the actions taken by the Secretariat, including through meetings of the interdepartmental task force and close interaction among all departments/offices concerned, as well as an assessment of the results achieved, lessons learned and recommendations for future action.

09-24680 (E) 050309

# I. Introduction

1. In order to prevent a recurrence of the situation in which an the unprecedented number of documents were submitted late for the second resumed session of the Fifth Committee during the sixty-second session of the General Assembly, which affected the smooth functioning of that body and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, the Assembly, in its resolution 63/248, requested the Secretary-General to take urgent measures to improve overall timely submission of documents. Accordingly, the Secretariat established an interdepartmental task force comprising all Secretariat entities involved in the drafting and processing of documents for the second resumed session of the Fifth Committee during the sixty-third session of the General Assembly. Through the Task Force, all Secretariat entities enhanced their coordination at all levels to examine the lessons learned, share best practices, develop detailed schedules for the submission of documents and establish an accountability mechanism through continuing follow-up actions, with a view to significantly improving the timely submission and issuance of documents for the second resumed session of the Fifth Committee and the Advisory Committee at its winter session.

# II. Actions

## A. Interdepartmental task force

2. The interdepartmental task force, which was chaired by the Assistant Secretary-General for General Assembly and Conference Management, was established in August 2008.[1] The task force held three formal meetings to apply and monitor the implementation of the slotting system for the submission of documents.

3. As the first step, it was agreed that in future, the formulation of document submission schedules for the second resumed session of the Fifth Committee should start earlier in the year, i.e., in July, rather than September. It was acknowledged that that date could not be advanced any further, since the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts would not be able to send budget instructions to field missions until after the relevant mandates had been adopted at the second resumed session of the Fifth Committee, concluding in June.

4. At the first meeting, the task force discussed whether the current procedure for the preparation and approval of reports could be streamlined so as to shorten the process and allow for the early submission of documents for processing. It was noted that interactions among the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Field Support had been proactive and intensive, but also convoluted and time-consuming, and that efforts should be made to rationalize existing procedures in the light of the

[1] The membership of the task force consisted of the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management, the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts and the Office of Human Resources Management of the Department of Management, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Field Support, the Independent Audit Advisory Committee, the Board of Auditors, the Office of Internal Oversight Services and the secretariats of the Fifth Committee and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions.

resource constraints and increasing workload. The Department of Field Support explained that the current procedure had been meticulously dissected and analysed by a working group and that it would not be feasible to revamp it. However, the Department was applying a more streamlined procedure called "Abacus" to six missions in 2008, under which it would send teams to missions to help them prepare reports so as to reduce the need for multiple rounds of exchanges between field missions and Headquarters. It was suggested that if a thorough review of the current timeline showed it to be the absolute minimum required, the relevant intergovernmental and expert bodies should be informed at an early stage so that they could adjust their programmes of work accordingly.

5. Also at the first meeting, the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts confirmed, on the basis of prior working-level discussions with the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management, that all of the peacekeeping performance reports would be submitted for processing in December 2008, while most of the peacekeeping budget reports would be submitted in a staggered manner in January 2009. The Office, as the coordinator for author departments, would inform the Department in a timely manner of any changes in the submission schedule or significant increases in the length of the reports and of the addition of newly mandated reports. At the ensuing meetings, the Office cited new mandates of the General Assembly and the Security Council, as well as new developments in the missions, as affecting the submission schedule, asked for adjustments to the submission dates and was requested to abide by the revised dates.

6. With regard to the issue of whether peacekeeping performance and budget reports could be issued in all official languages for consideration by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions at its winter session, it was noted that, since the session would begin in January 2009, as compared with February in previous years, and since the current document preparation and approval procedure followed by all Secretariat entities would allow for the submission of budget reports to the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management only in January 2009, the timely issuance of all of them in all the official languages for consideration by the Advisory Committee would not be possible.

7. Attention was drawn to several cross-cutting overview reports that were not prepared exclusively by any one department and consequently required more interdepartmental coordination so that they would not be overlooked in the document planning stage. It was agreed that the overview reports would be given priority during preparation and processing so that the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions could take them up in the early part of its session. It was also suggested that the Advisory Committee continue to determine its priorities for consideration early on so as to allow author and processing departments to act accordingly.

8. Other reports to be taken up by the Fifth Committee at its second resumed session, such as those prepared by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Field Support, the Board of Auditors and the Office of Internal Oversight Services, were also discussed to confirm the agreement reached on the submission dates.

## B. Close interaction among all Secretariat author entities

9. All author entities and the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management, following initial discussions at the task force meetings, began to conduct meetings with the documentation focal points of various departments, which proved to be an effective means of monitoring and improving document preparation.

10. Specifically, the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management implemented the slotting system by assigning submission dates for all reports that the Department knew would already be considered at the second resumed session of the Fifth Committee during the sixty-third session of the General Assembly. The submission dates were agreed upon, taking into account realistically achievable targets, with a view to facilitating the issuance of the reports in all official languages for consideration by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions at its winter session in 2009. The submission dates agreed upon were backed up by schedules detailing document preparation and approval deadlines for each and every round of exchanges between the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Field Support and other entities that provided input. The Department for General Assembly and Conference Management then followed up on the implementation of the schedule with all author entities, making adjustments in those cases in which the preparation of reports was affected by circumstances beyond the control of the Secretariat. Since adjustments in submission dates would have an impact on the issuance dates, any deviation from the original plan was immediately brought to the attention of all parties concerned, including all Department processing units.

11. Further to such exchanges among author entities, the task force emphasized the need for enhanced coordination between, on the one hand, author entities and the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management as the processing department, and, on the other, the secretariats of the Fifth Committee and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions. The secretariats of both the Fifth Committee and the Advisory Committee participated in the task force meetings and were provided with up-to-date information on submission and issuance dates for all the pre-session documentation so as to facilitate the preparation of their respective programmes of work. Starting in December 2008, the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts held discussions with the secretariat of the Advisory Committee to adjust and prioritize its preparation of reports in the light of the requirements of the Advisory Committee, especially given the need for the Office to cluster its submission of all relevant information (performance report, budget report and supplementary information) by mission to enable the Advisory Committee to begin its consideration.

12. Subsequently, efforts were also made to synchronize the programme of work of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions with the prospective schedule for consideration in the Fifth Committee so that reports of the Advisory Committee could be issued in time for consideration by the Fifth Committee. In this regard, consideration has been given to slotting the Advisory Committee reports, but concrete action has yet to be taken, since that would depend on a more predictable pattern of document submission to the Advisory Committee as

well as on the length of time taken by the Committee to consider each item. It has been agreed, however, that the submission of Advisory Committee reports for processing will be staggered, which is conducive to their issuance in time for consideration by the Fifth Committee at its second resumed session.

13. The Department for General Assembly and Conference Management was instrumental in facilitating that synchronized approach to the programmes of work of the two bodies, since this was considered crucial to both its efforts to better prioritize the processing of the reports and its need to plan for the processing of reports of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions.

14. In order to provide transparency to all parties involved and assist with their advance planning, the Under-Secretary-General for General Assembly and Conference Management addressed a memorandum on 9 February 2009 to the Chairpersons of the Fifth Committee and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the progress made, as well as the challenges ahead.

### C. Capacity planning in the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management

15. As the slotting schedule anticipated the submission of a large number of documents to the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management at the turn of the year, which is usually a period of relatively low workload and processing capacity, the Department made a deliberate effort to increase the capacity of all its processing units to meet the changing operational requirements and to handle the incoming workload on a priority basis as and when it happened. The effort was designed to ensure that when the unseasonably high volume of work entered the Department, it would be processed in a timely manner. However, it also involved putting greater pressure on author departments to submit on time, so that the capacity that the Department had built up would be fully utilized.

## III. Results

16. Thanks to meticulous planning, close follow-up and robust implementation efforts on the part of all Secretariat entities concerned, the preliminary results available show a significant improvement over the previous year (see annex), although much remains to be done.

**Overview of submission, processing and issuance of documentation: 2007-2009**

| | *2009 (as at 19 February)* | *2008 (as at 19 February)* | *2007 (as at 19 February)* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Total number of documents slotted for submission to the Fifth Committee at its second resumed session | 55 | 48 | 56 |
| Documents already submitted to the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management for processing | 42 (including all 20 performance reports and 9 of 16 budget reports) | 18 (including 13 of 17 performance reports and 3 of 17 budget reports) | 23 (including 17 of 20 performance reports and 4 of 14 budget reports) |
| Documents already issued to intergovernmental bodies | 25 (including 18 performance reports and 1 budget report) | 11 (including 9 performance reports; no budget reports) | 13 (including 11 performance reports and 1 budget report) |
| Documents issued in all official languages before their consideration by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions | 24 (including 18 performance reports and 1 budget report) | 11 (including 9 performance reports; no budget reports) | 13 (including 11 performance reports and 1 budget report) |

17. It should be noted that as a result of the Secretariat's concerted efforts, all 7 reports slotted for submission in November 2008 were submitted on or ahead of the original slot dates agreed upon by the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management and author entities, and of the 14 reports slotted for submission in December 2008, 13 were submitted on or ahead of the original slot dates. It was only in January 2009 that adjustments had to be made to the submission dates of 19 reports, owing to a combination of factors beyond the control of the Secretariat, most notably the adoption of new mandates by the Security Council and the peacekeeping budget implications arising from General Assembly resolution 63/250 on human resources management. Hence, the timely submission of those reports was affected and they could not be issued in all languages in time for consideration by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions. Had it not been for such circumstances beyond the control of the Secretariat, the rate of timely submission and timely issuance of documents could have been higher.

18. Overall, it is encouraging to note that all Secretariat entities involved became keenly aware of the significance of the exercise and attached great importance to it, attending the task force meetings at a senior management level, providing the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management with submission dates that were backed up by detailed intradepartmental and interdepartmental

schedules, informing the Department of and justifying any changes in the dates of submission and abiding by the agreed dates to the extent possible.

19. It should be noted that the results contained in the present report are preliminary, since the report is scheduled for consideration by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and the Committee on Conferences at its organizational session before being considered by the Fifth Committee. The Secretariat will provide more up-to-date information to the Chairperson of the Fifth Committee before the beginning of its second resumed session in May. It will also provide comprehensive information on the results achieved in the annual report of the Secretary-General on the pattern of conferences, to be submitted to the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session.

# IV. Lessons learned and next steps

20. The experience gained through the slotting exercise reveals much about why a balance must be struck between the desirable and the achievable and what needs to be done to accomplish more.

## A. Lessons learned

21. **When mandates are adopted very close to the scheduled meetings of the resumed sessions of the Fifth Committee and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and have a significant impact on a large number of documents for the sessions concerned, despite the best efforts on the part of the Secretariat, there can be no realistic expectation that all documents will be issued six weeks before the start of the sessions.** The peacekeeping reports are prepared at a time when a combination of factors are at play that are often beyond the control of the Secretariat, in particular new mandates that might emanate from the General Assembly and the Security Council. Experience shows that no matter how well-developed advance planning is, and no matter how determined all Secretariat entities are to adhere to the planned deadlines, new mandates from intergovernmental bodies and new developments on the ground almost invariably affect the pre-agreed timeline for the submission and issuance of documents. In a way, this is unavoidable, owing to the nature of the Organization; indeed, it is a sign of the vitality of the Organization. Consequently, there has to be enough flexibility in the mechanism to allow author departments to respond to unforeseen circumstances. The Department for General Assembly and Conference Management, for its part, is always prepared to prioritize the processing of the relevant documents in accordance with section III, paragraph 9, of resolution 59/265, but it should be borne in mind that new mandates emanating from the General Assembly, especially when adopted towards the end of the session, will have an impact on the timely submission of documents. Given the limited time between the end of the main session of the General Assembly and the winter session of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, the issuance of documents in all official languages in time for their consideration by the Advisory Committee will not be possible, although the Secretariat will do its utmost to issue them before the second resumed session of the Fifth Committee.

22. **The timely issuance of other slotted documents that were submitted on time was adversely affected**, as the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management gave priority to the processing of documents of the Fifth Committee and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, a considerable number of which were submitted later than the originally agreed submission dates. In brief, extensive late submissions, no matter how well justified, disrupt the capacity planning of the Department and can adversely affect the timely issuance of other documents that are submitted on time.

## B. Next steps

23. **The methodology for planning for the documentation needs of the Fifth Committee has proved effective and will continue to guide the work of the Secretariat in future.**

24. **Peacekeeping performance and budget reports will continue to be slotted for submission as early as is feasible, taking into account the possible adoption of new mandates by the intergovernmental bodies concerned.**

25. **Author entities will continue to explore ways to ensure the timely preparation of reports.** The streamlining of exchanges among author entities should receive serious consideration. Author entities will do their utmost to adhere to the submission dates they committed to and refrain from requesting changes in the dates, except for reasons beyond the control of the Secretariat.

26. **The task force will be institutionalized as a standing mechanism to handle the documentation of the Fifth Committee at its successive sessions.** The Central Planning and Coordination Service of the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management will continue to play a pivotal coordinating role throughout the process, including in the areas of advance planning, following up on implementation, workload forecasting, scheduling of processing and reviewing lessons learned.

# Annex

## Comparison of submission, processing and issuance of documentation: 2007-2009

| | | 2009 (second resumed session) | | | | | 2008 (second resumed session) | | | 2007 (second resumed session) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *A. Performance reports* | *Author* | *Slot date of submission* | *Date received* | *Number of words received* | *Date issued* | *Processing time (days)* | *Date received* | *Number of words received* | *Date issued* | *Date received* | *Number of words received* | *Date issued* |
| MINURCAT, for the period from 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008 | Department of Management | 19 December 2008 | 25 November 2008 | 5 511 | 18 December 2008 | 23 | No submission | | | | | |
| MINURSO, for the period from 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008 | Department of Management | 19 December 2008 | 15 December 2008 | 6 286 | 14 January 2009 | 30 | 21 December 2007 | 4 177 | 17 January 2008 | 27 December 2006 | 4 144 | 23 January 2007 |
| MINUSTAH, for the period from 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008 | Department of Management | 19 December 2008 | 17 November 2008 | 18 846 | 10 January 2009 | 54 | 7 January 2008 | 15 052 | 20 February 2008 | 13 February 2007 | 10 609 | 14 March 2007 |
| MONUC, for the period from 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008 | Department of Management | 19 December 2008 | 21 November 2008 | 20 080 | 8 January 2009 | 48 | 12 March 2008 | 15 276 | 22 April 2008 | 22 December 2006 | 14 017 | 23 January 2007 |
| UNAMID, for the period from 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008 | Department of Management | 10 November 2008 | 10 November 2008 | 7 488 | 26 November 2008 | 16 | No submission | | | | | |
| UNDOF, for the period from 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008 | Department of Management | 19 December 2008 | 5 November 2008 | 5 332 | 25 November 2008 | 20 | 3 December 2007 | 3 202 | 5 January 2008 | 21 December 2006 | 2 733 | 15 January 2007 |
| UNFICYP, for the period from 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008 | Department of Management | 19 December 2008 | 10 November 2008 | 6 652 | 4 December 2008 | 24 | 17 January 2008 | 5 546 | 13 February 2008 | 31 January 2007 | 6 192 | 21 February 2007 |
| UNIFIL, for the period from 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008 | Department of Management | 19 December 2008 | 5 November 2008 | 6 649 | 21 November 2008 | 16 | 7 January 2008 | 5 207 | 1 February 2008 | 30 March 2007 | 2 947 | 20 April 2007 |
| United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, Italy, for the period from 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008 | Department of Management | 19 December 2008 | 17 December 2008 | 7 217 | 29 January 2009 | 43 | 31 January 2008 | 6 292 | 22 February 2008 | 26 December 2006 | 4 159 | 13 January 2007 |

| | | 2009 (second resumed session) | | | | | 2008 (second resumed session) | | | 2007 (second resumed session) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *A. Performance reports* | *Author* | *Slot date of submission* | *Date received* | *Number of words received* | *Date issued* | *Processing time (days)* | *Date received* | *Number of words received* | *Date issued* | *Date received* | *Number of words received* | *Date issued* |
| UNMEE, for the period from 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008 | Department of Management | 19 December 2008 | 21 November 2008 | 8 700 | 18 December 2008 | 27 | 30 November 2007 | 6 258 | 4 January 2008 | 29 January 2007 | 5 084 | 12 February 2007 |
| UNMIK, for the period from 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008 | Department of Management | 19 December 2008 | 25 November 2008 | 13 231 | 15 January 2009 | 51 | 21 December 2007 | 13 191 | 31 January 2008 | 22 December 2006 | 10 206 | 27 January 2007 |
| UNMIL, for the period from 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008 | Department of Management | 19 December 2008 | 4 December 2008 | 19 750 | 20 January 2009 | 47 | 17 January 2008 | 13 637 | 22 February 2008 | 26 January 2007 | 12 250 | 23 February 2007 |
| UNMIS, for the period from 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008 | Department of Management | 19 December 2008 | 12 December 2008 | 29 399 | 29 January 2009 | 48 | 17 March 2008 | 24 424 | 6 May 2008 | 8 January 2007 | 22 519 | 13 February 2007 |
| UNMIT, for the period from 28 August 2007 to 30 June 2008 | Department of Management | 19 December 2008 | 15 December 2008 | 18 564 | 30 January 2009 | 46 | 15 January 2008 | 12 477 | 12 February 2008 | No submission | | |
| UNOCI, for the period from 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008 | Department of Management | 19 December 2008 | 15 December 2008 | 20 910 | 30 January 2009 | 46 | 9 January 2008 | 12 185 | 15 February 2008 | 22 December 2006 | 13 265 | 24 January 2007 |
| UNOMIG, for the period from 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008 | Department of Management | 19 December 2008 | 3 November 2008 | 8 027 | 26 November 2008 | 23 | 7 January 2008 | 5 933 | 30 January 2008 | 18 January 2007 | 5 514 | 7 February 2007 |
| Performance report on the budget of the support account for peacekeeping operations for the period from 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008 (A/63/698) | Department of Management | 2 February 2009 | 2 February 2009 | 15 201 | | | 27 March 2008 | 12 924 | 6 May 2008 | 8 February 2007 | 27 744 | 6 March 2007 |
| Performance report on the budget of the support account for peacekeeping operations for the period from 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008 (A/63/698/Add.1) | Department of Management | 2 February 2009 | 2 February 2009 | 32 398 | | | 26 March 2008 | 15 838 | 8 May 2008 | 8 February 2007 | 15 838 | 9 March 2007 |

| | | 2009 (second resumed session) | | | | | 2008 (second resumed session) | | | 2007 (second resumed session) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *A. Performance reports* | *Author* | *Slot date of submission* | *Date received* | *Number of words received* | *Date issued* | *Processing time (days)* | *Date received* | *Number of words received* | *Date issued* | *Date received* | *Number of words received* | *Date issued* |
| Financing of the United Nations Operation in Burundi (A/63/551) | Department of Management | 31 December 2008 | 18 November 2008 | 1 278 | 10 December 2008 | 22 | | | No submission | | | |
| Final performance report of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (A/63/681) | Department of Management | 15 January 2009 | 15 January 2009 | 822 | 30 January 2009 | 15 | | | No submission | | | |

| B. Budget reports | Author | 2009 (second resumed session) Slot date of submission | Date received | Number of words received | Date issued | Processing time (days) | 2008 (second resumed session) Date received | Number of words received | Date issued | 2007 (second resumed session) Date received | Number of words received | Date issued |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| MINURCAT, for the period from 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010 | Department of Management | 6 March 2009 | | | | | 16 April 2008 | 24 369 | 15 May 2008 | No submission | | |
| MINURSO, for the period from 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010 | Department of Management | 6 February 2009 | | | | | 7 February 2008 | 9 423 | 7 March 2008 | 14 February 2007 | 7 078 | 12 March 2007 |
| MINUSTAH, for the period from 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010 | Department of Management | 5 February 2009 | 5 February 2009 | 31 546 | | | 5 March 2008 | 29 016 | 18 April 2008 | 18 April 2007 | 20 716 | 9 May 2007 |
| MONUC, for the period from 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010 | Department of Management | 27 February 2009 | | | | | 19 March 2008 | 32 499 | 8 May 2008 | 28 February 2007 | 22 979 | 10 April 2007 |
| UNAMID, for the period from 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010 | Department of Management | 12 February 2009 | 12 February 2009 | 27 485 | | | 9 April 2008 | 25 337 | 15 May 2008 | 3 October 2007 | 35 236 | 29 October 2007 |
| UNDOF, for the period from 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010 | Department of Management | 23 January 2009 | 20 January 2009 | 9 643 | | | 5 March 2008 | 6 086 | 1 April 2008 | 22 December 2006 | 4 325 | 21 February 2007 |
| UNFICYP, for the period from 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010 | Department of Management | 26 January 2009 | 26 January 2009 | 11 086 | | | 5 March 2008 | 8 644 | 1 April 2008 | 1 March 2007 | 8 222 | 24 March 2007 |
| UNIFIL, for the period from 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010 | Department of Management | 23 January 2009 | 23 January 2009 | 14 071 | | | 17 March 2008 | 17 078 | 22 April 2008 | 19 April 2007 | 11 366 | 5 May 2007 |
| United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, Italy, for the period from 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010 | Department of Management | 16 February 2009 | | | | | 27 March 2008 | 15 726 | 6 May 2008 | 16 February 2007 | 18 307 | 19 March 2007 |
| UNMIK, for the period from 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010 | Department of Management | 10 March 2009 | | | | | 11 February 2008 | 19 000 | 12 May 2008 | 6 March 2007 | 15 087 | 10 April 2007 |

| B. Budget reports | Author | 2009 (second resumed session) Slot date of submission | Date received | Number of words received | Date issued | Processing time (days) | 2008 (second resumed session) Date received | Number of words received | Date issued | 2007 (second resumed session) Date received | Number of words received | Date issued |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| UNMIL, for the period from 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010 | Department of Management | 19 February 2009 | | | | | 26 March 2008 | 28 732 | 7 May 2008 | 6 March 2007 | 19 338 | 12 April 2007 |
| UNMIS, for the period from 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010 | Department of Management | 9 February 2009 | 9 February 2009 | 49 964 | | | 7 April 2008 | 42 396 | 29 May 2008 | 15 February 2007 | 24 870 | 20 March 2007 |
| UNMIT, for the period from 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010 | Department of Management | 9 February 2009 | 6 February 2009 | 26 275 | | | 18 March 2008 | 24 040 | 6 May 2008 | 20 April 2007 | 21 497 | 10 May 2007 |
| UNOCI, for the period from 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010 | Department of Management | 17 February 2009 | 18 February 2009 | 22 450 | | | 17 March 2008 | 24 868 | 29 April 2008 | 1 March 2007 | 18 998 | 6 April 2007 |
| UNOMIG, for the period from 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010 | Department of Management | 15 January 2009 | 15 January 2009 | 11 203 | 13 February 2009 | 29 | 7 February 2008 | 10 518 | 11 March 2008 | 26 February 2007 | 6 545 | 20 March 2007 |
| Budget for the support account for peacekeeping operations for the period from 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010 | Department of Management | 23 February 2009 | | | | | 7 April 2008 | 96 128 | 14 May 2008 | 16-20 April 2007 | 176 912 | 2 May 2007 |

| C. Special reports | Author | 2009 (second resumed session) Slot date of submission | Date received | Number of words | Date issued | Processing time (days) | 2008 (second resumed session) Date received | Number of words | Date issued | 2007 (second resumed session) Date received | Number of words | Date issued |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Updated financial position of closed peacekeeping missions as at 30 June 2008 (A/63/581) | Department of Management | 2 December 2008 | 2 December 2008 | 1 562 | 2 January 2009 | 31 | 20 March 2008 | 1 449 | 11 April 2008 | 25 April 2007 | 3 180 | 28 April 2007 |
| Overview of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations (A/63/896) | Department of Management | 30 January 2009 | 30 January 2009 | 22 834 | | | 7 March 2008 | 28 602 | 2 May 2008 | No submission | | |
| Strengthening the capacity of the United Nations to manage and sustain peacekeeping operations (A/63/702) | Department of Management | 3 February 2009 | 3 February 2009 | 14 487 | | | No submission | | | | | |
| Updated report on the review of the methodology for rates of reimbursement to troop-contributing countries (A/63/697) | Department of Management | 30 January 2009 | 30 January 2009 | 1 838 | 6 February 2009 | 7 | No submission | | | | | |
| Comprehensive review of the compensation of death and disability benefits to military contingents, formed police units, military observers and civilian police officers (A/63/550) | Department of Field Support | 17 November 2008 | 17 November 2008 | 4 167 | 13 December 2008 | 26 | No submission | | | | | |
| Welfare and recreation needs of all categories of personnel and detailed implications (A/63/675) | Department of Field Support | 15 January 2009 | 13 January 2009 | 11 373 | 7 February 2009 | 25 | 24 January 2008 | 8 190 | 16 February 2008 | No submission | | |

| C. Special reports | Author | 2009 (second resumed session) Slot date of submission | Date received | Number of words | Date issued | Processing time (days) | 2008 (second resumed session) Date received | Number of words | Date issued | 2007 (second resumed session) Date received | Number of words | Date issued |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Governance of procurement | Department of Management | 27 February 2009 | | | | | | | No submission | | | |
| Action taken to improve the timely submission of documents for the Fifth Committee (A/63/735) | Department for General Assembly and Conference Management | 2 March 2009 | | | | | | | No submission | | | |
| Report on the progress of training in peacekeeping (A/63/680) | Department of Peacekeeping Operations | 14 January 2009 | 14 January 2009 | 7 023 | 10 February 2009 | 27 | 6 February 2008 | 380 | 19 February 2008 | No submission | | |
| Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse (A/63/720) | Department of Management | 17 February 2009 | 17 February 2009 | 5 989 | | | 24 June 2008 | 5 144 | 17 July 2008 | 15 June 2007 | 6 890 | 11 July 2007 |

| D. Audit reports | Author | 2009 (second resumed session) Slot date of submission | Date received | Number of words received | Date issued | Processing time (days) | 2008 (second resumed session) Date received | Number of words received | Date issued | 2007 (second resumed session) Date received | Number of words received | Date issued |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Financial report and audited financial statements for the 12-month period from 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008 and report of the Board of Auditors, vol. II, United Nations peacekeeping operations (A/63/5/vol.II) | United Nations Board of Auditors | 17 February 2009 | 17 February 2009 | 62 426 | | | 5 March 2008 | 48 081 | 25 April 2008 | 22 February 2007 | 65 236 | 23 April 2007 |
| Implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors concerning United Nations peacekeeping operations for the financial period ended 30 June 2008 | Department of Management | 24 March 2009 | | | | | 7 April 2008 | 15 704 | 30 April 2008 | 16 March 2007 | 12 615 | 20 April 2007 |

| *E. Reports of the Office of Internal Oversight Services* | *Author* | *2009 (second resumed session)* *Slot date of submission* | *Date received* | *Number of words received* | *Date issued* | *Processing time (days)* | *2008 (second resumed session)* *Date received* | *Number of words received* | *Date issued* | *2007 (second resumed session)* *Date received* | *Number of words received* | *Date issued* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Report on the activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services, part II | Office of Internal Oversight Services | 23 February 2009 | | | | | 25 February 2008 | 9 504 | 25 March 2008 | 23 February 2007 | 11 594 | 22 March 2007 |
| Report on the review and analysis of the Secretariat for managing and maintaining peacekeeping operations | Office of Internal Oversight Services | 9 March 2009 | | | | | | | No submission | | | |
| Audit of the use of the extraordinary measures for the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (A/63/668) | Office of Internal Oversight Services | 31 December 2008 | 31 December 2008 | 11 281 | 29 January 2009 | 29 | | | No submission | | | |
| Note by the Secretary-General on the report on the activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services, part II | Department of Management | Dependent on whether the Secretary-General comments on the report | | | | | 14 April 2008 | 903 | 24 April 2008 | 2 May 2007 | 1 855 | 5 May 2007 |
| Note by the Secretary-General on the audit of the use of extraordinary measures for the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (A/63/668/Add.1) | Department of Management | 30 January 2009 | 30 January 2009 | 8 652 | | | | | No submission | | | |

| E. Reports of the Office of Internal Oversight Services | Author | 2009 (second resumed session) Slot date of submission | Date received | Number of words | Date issued | Processing time (days) | 2008 (second resumed session) Date received | Number of words | Date issued | 2007 (second resumed session) Date received | Number of words | Date issued |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Report of Independent Audit Advisory Committee on the budget of the Office of Internal Oversight Services under the support account for peacekeeping operations for the period from 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010 (A/63/703) | Independent Audit Advisory Committee | 2 February 2009 | 3 February 2009 | 4 005 | | | No submission | | | | | |
| Programme evaluation of the performance and the achievement of results in the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (A/63/713) | Office of Internal Oversight Services | 9 February 2009 | 9 February 2009 | 10 426 | | | No submission | | | | | |

*Abbreviations*: MINURCAT, United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad; MINURSO, United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara; MINUSTAH, United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti; MONUC, United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; UNAMID, African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur; UNDOF, United Nations Disengagement Observer Force; UNFICYP, United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus; UNIFIL, United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon; UNMEE, United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea; UNMIK, United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo; UNMIL, United Nations Mission in Liberia; UNMIS, United Nations Mission in the Sudan; UNMIT, United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste; UNOCI, United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire; UNOMIG, United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia.

United Nations A/63/736

General Assembly

Distr.: General
23 February 2009

Original: English

**Sixty-third session**
Agenda item 118
**Programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009**

# Capital master plan

## Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

## I. Introduction

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the following reports relating to the capital master plan:

(a) Sixth annual progress report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the capital master plan (A/63/477);

(b) Report of the Secretary-General on associated costs related to the capital master plan (A/63/582);

(c) Report of the Board of Auditors on the capital master plan for the year ended 31 December 2007 (A/63/5 (Vol. V));

(d) Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors contained in its reports on the United Nations for the biennium ended 31 December 2007 and on the capital master plan for the year ended 31 December 2007 (A/63/327).

During its consideration of the above-mentioned reports, the Advisory Committee met with the Executive Director of the capital master plan project and other representatives of the Secretary-General, as well as with members of the Audit Operations Committee, who provided additional information and clarification. The Committee also visited various project sites. The Committee notes that the Office of Internal Oversight Services has prepared a comprehensive audit of the capital master plan.

2. In its resolution 61/251, the General Assembly approved the financing of the capital master plan and decided that the total budget for the project was not to exceed $1,876.7 million. Subsequently, in its resolution 62/87, the Assembly approved the Secretary-General's proposal for an accelerated strategy that would result in the completion of the project by 2013. In July 2007, the Organization

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entered into a pre-construction management contract with Skanska Building USA (hereinafter referred to as "Skanska").

## II. Report of the Board of Auditors on the capital master plan for the year ended 31 December 2007

3. In its report on the capital master plan for the year ended 31 December 2007 (A/63/5 (Vol. V)), the Board of Auditors made a series of recommendations related both to the management of the project and to financial issues. The Board's main recommendations, which are set out in paragraph 11 of its report, focus on project management questions. The Board recommended that the Administration:

(a) Include in the sixth annual progress report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the capital master plan an update on the schedule and a new global cost estimate for the project;

(b) Detail the economic assumptions on which cost estimates are based, and monitor the changes in those assumptions and the impact of those changes on the project;

(c) Develop a summary scoreboard to describe the situation of the operation at any given time;

(d) Create the advisory board requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 57/292.

4. In his report on the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors (A/63/327) the Secretary-General indicated that all the above-mentioned main recommendations are currently under implementation. **The Advisory Committee encourages the Administration to pursue the expeditious implementation of all of the Board's recommendations.**

5. In his sixth annual progress report on the implementation of the capital master plan, the Secretary-General provided a new global cost estimate for the project (see A/63/477, table 1). The Advisory Committee was informed that the estimate in question was completed in September 2008. The Committee points out that, by the time the General Assembly considers the sixth annual progress report in early 2009, the design and construction phases will have advanced considerably, with concomitant consequences for the projected costs. In response to its request for more recent figures, the Committee was informed that the preparation of a global estimate was a very labour intensive and costly exercise and that it was not therefore considered prudent to complete such an exercise more than once a year. **The Advisory Committee stresses the importance of providing Member States with the most accurate estimate of the overall cost of the project. The Committee therefore trusts that the seventh annual progress report will contain a new global estimate prepared on the basis of the most up-to-date information.**

6. In paragraph 18 of its report, the Board of Auditors pointed out that the particularly uncertain economic environment could have consequences for construction prices in New York. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the current economic downturn was potentially advantageous for the capital master plan insofar as it had led to lower costs for labour and materials. The Committee was also informed that inflation was no longer a significant risk to the

project and that some recent bids had been between 5 and 10 per cent lower than anticipated. In response to the Committee's concerns about the increased risk of bankruptcy, representatives of the Secretary-General indicated that steps were being taken to mitigate that risk through, inter alia, the use of contractors' bonds. In this context, the Board's recommendation on the monitoring of economic assumptions (see para. 3 (b) above) takes on particular significance. **The Advisory Committee therefore trusts that detailed information on that issue will be included in the seventh annual progress report.**

7. With regard to the Board's recommendation on the creation of an advisory board (see para. 3 (d) above), the Advisory Committee notes that the General Assembly first requested the establishment of an independent and impartial board in its resolution 57/292. The original mandate of the board was to advise the Secretary-General on financing matters and to provide advice on overall project issues (see A/57/285 and Corr.1, para. 66). However, in paragraph 52 of its report, the Board pointed out that no follow-up has been given to that proposal. The Board recalled that, in its resolution 62/87, the Assembly regretted the delay in the appointment of the advisory board and urged the Secretary-General to expedite its establishment.

8. In his sixth annual progress report, the Secretary-General indicated that efforts to establish an advisory board will continue (see A/63/477, para. 20). Upon enquiry, however, the Advisory Committee was informed that all potential candidates for the board had declined to serve owing to liability-related concerns. The Committee was also informed that, since the project is already well advanced, with the design completed, construction under way and financing fully established, the Secretary-General is of the view that, at this juncture, the mission of the advisory board appears limited.

9. Accordingly, the Advisory Committee was informed that the Secretary-General was suggesting that a separate, appropriate role for an advisory board at this stage in the renovation would be to examine and offer views on how to address the long-term space needs at United Nations Headquarters, particularly in light of the request of the General Assembly to examine the feasibility of constructing a permanent building on the North Lawn. The advisory board might also be tasked with examining the larger question of how the Organization's space needs can be addressed, given both the continued expansion of the Organization's presence in New York, the likely termination of certain leases through the United Nations Development Corporation and the availability of other commercial and host Government-supported options for office space in the vicinity of the Headquarters complex. **The Advisory Committee considers that the Secretary-General should proceed with the establishment of an advisory board as initially intended, and that any proposed changes to the mandate of the board should be presented for the consideration and decision of the General Assembly.**

10. In addition to the main recommendations discussed above, the Board of Auditors made some observations on financial issues. In particular, it reiterated its previous recommendation that the Office of the Capital Master Plan keep capitalized costs separate from operating costs relating to the project (see A/63/5 (Vol. V), para. 57). The Board also recommended that the Office, together with the Accounts Division, put in place a mechanism that directly links actual expenses and forecast expenses in order to make the management of the budget of the operation reliable (ibid., para. 65). The Advisory Committee notes that, in his report on the

implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors, the Secretary-General indicated that the first of those recommendations is under implementation and that the second had already been implemented (see A/63/327, paras. 285-288).

## III. Sixth annual progress report on the implementation of the capital master plan

11. In section II of his sixth annual progress report on the implementation of the capital master plan (A/63/477), the Secretary-General provided an overview of the progress made since his previous report (A/62/364 and Corr.1) and affirmed that the project is still on schedule. He also indicated that the cost of the capital master plan is closer to the amount budgeted than at the time of the preparation of the fifth progress report.

12. As the Secretary-General indicated in paragraph 7 of the progress report, the Organization entered into leases for office swing space at the Albano Building (305 East 46th Street) in July 2007 and at the United Nations Federal Credit Union (UNFCU) Building (Long Island City) and at 380 Madison Avenue in August 2008. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that "fit-out" of all those spaces had begun and that current estimated completion dates for the "fit-out" process were as follows:

(a) 380 Madison Avenue, initial floor: February 2009; remaining 13 floors: June-August 2009;

(b) Albano Building: May-June 2009;

(c) UNFCU Building (four floors only): June 2009.

The Committee was also informed that the North Lawn Conference Building was expected to be ready for occupancy in October 2009.

13. In paragraph 11 of his report, the Secretary-General indicated that the relocation plan, which covers all departments and offices that will relocate in order for renovation to commence, was finalized in August 2008. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that a preliminary version of the plan would be submitted to all departments and offices for review in early February 2009.

14. The Advisory Committee notes that the "fit-out" and relocation schedules have already been subject to delays. For instance, as indicated by the Board of Auditors, it was originally thought that the Secretary-General and his Executive Office would move into their swing space location in the temporary North Lawn Conference Building in May 2009 (see A/63/5 (Vol. V), para. 24), whereas, according to current projections, that move will not take place until October 2009. **The Advisory Committee urges the Secretary-General to take all necessary steps to avoid any further slippages in the relocation schedule, since, as indicated in paragraph 32 below, such delays will be extremely costly. Delays also have the potential to disrupt the work of the General Assembly at the main part of its sixty-fourth session.**

15. The Secretary-General's report also addressed the issue of value engineering (A/63/477, sect. V). In his previous annual progress report, the Secretary-General indicated that, in order to bring the project back within the approved budget of

$1,876.7 million, a value engineering exercise was being undertaken in an effort to find opportunities to reduce costs in a way that did not compromise quality or functionality (see A/62/364 and Corr.1, para. 30). In paragraph 15 of his current report, the Secretary-General indicated that, thus far, the exercise has resulted in approximately $100 million in potential cost savings.

16. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the most significant change to the scope of the project that had arisen as a result of value engineering was the decision to renovate the Conference Building in a single phase rather than in two phases, and that that change had yielded $17.5 million in potential cost savings. However, the Committee also notes that some of the so-called savings identified through the value engineering exercise are actually the result of external, market-related factors. For instance, the Committee was informed that rapid changes in broadcast equipment technology had allowed the project team to rethink the location and size of the permanent broadcast facility.

17. In paragraph 15 of his report, the Secretary-General indicated that, at present, the project cost overrun stands at $97.5 million. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the Office of the Capital Master Plan was aiming to realize an additional $100 million in savings through further value engineering efforts. The Committee was also informed that the current bidding climate should allow for additional cost reductions.

18. **The Advisory Committee continues to see merit in the value engineering exercise and encourages the Secretary-General to pursue it. However, the Committee recommends that the Secretary-General clarify the definition of value engineering to reflect the fact that the exercise entails the realization of cost reductions through a combination of design modifications, the selection of more efficient and/or less expensive alternatives and benefits derived from the changed economic circumstances. The Committee further recommends a cautious approach to the pursuit of value engineering to ensure that the quality and functionality of the project are not undermined.** In that connection, the Committee was informed that a previously rejected proposal to reduce costs by encapsulating some asbestos rather than abating it might be reconsidered. **The Committee stresses that the Organization has a commitment to safeguard the health of the staff, delegations, visitors and tourists at the United Nations, and therefore emphasizes the importance of strict compliance with the highest applicable standards for the handling of asbestos.**

19. On a related matter, the Advisory Committee draws attention to the recommendation of the Board of Auditors that the Administration specify in the cost estimate the cost of the fees relating to the value engineering programme (see A/63/5 (Vol. V), para. 28) and notes that it has not been implemented. **The Advisory Committee sees no reason why those costs cannot be disclosed, and therefore requests the Secretary-General to provide the relevant information to the General Assembly for its consideration of this question. The Committee also urges the Secretary-General to include in his seventh annual progress report a detailed description of the value engineering initiatives under way and a breakdown of the potential savings to be realized through each initiative.**

20. In section VI of his report, the Secretary-General described progress made in the area of sustainable design. The two key objectives of the sustainability initiatives outlined in the report are to reduce energy consumption by a projected

44 per cent and freshwater consumption by at least 40 per cent. **The Advisory Committee welcomes the efforts undertaken by the Secretary-General to ensure that the capital master plan contributes to the overall aim of "greening the United Nations" and notes that the aforementioned sustainability initiatives are being pursued within existing resources.**

21. A number of additional sustainability initiatives are detailed in paragraph 19 of the report. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that those initiatives, which consist of a building-integrated photovoltaic installation and the study of a wind energy demonstration project, would be implemented only if sufficient resources became available. **The Advisory Committee recommends that clear criteria for the selection of any additional sustainability initiatives, including a cost-benefit analysis, be developed and shared with the General Assembly.**

22. As the Secretary-General indicated in paragraph 21 of his report, in January 2008 the Secretariat reached an understanding with the authorities of the host city and country concerning the process by which the Organization would seek to meet local building, fire and safety codes. The agreement reached between the host city and the Secretariat states, inter alia, that the United Nations will voluntarily apply host city building codes to the capital master plan project and to United Nations Headquarters thereafter. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that that arrangement did not entail a waiver of the privileges and immunities enjoyed by the United Nations and that the intent behind it was to ensure that the Organization complied with the highest standards, particularly in the area of fire safety. In this connection, the Advisory Committee understands that it is the Organization's practice, wherever possible, to ensure that its premises comply with all relevant host country codes and standards.

23. **On a related matter, and given the critical role played by the host city in the area of safety and security, the Advisory Committee encourages the Secretary-General to pursue his negotiations on that issue with the relevant authorities.**

24. With regard to procurement, the Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that the renovation work had been split into 25 individual guaranteed maximum price contracts, eight of which had already been awarded (five for the North Lawn Conference Building (foundation; underground utilities; structure and envelope; early equipment; and mechanical systems, electrical, plumbing and fire protection); one for the Albano Building; one for the UNFCU Building; and one for the swing space in the third basement).

25. As stated in paragraph 6 above, the current economic climate is likely to be beneficial to the Organization in its efforts to implement the capital master plan within the approved budget. **The Advisory Committee emphasizes that, in awarding the remaining guaranteed maximum price contracts, every effort should be made to derive maximum benefit from prevailing favourable market conditions. In this connection, the Secretary-General may wish to consider conducting a market analysis and reporting the results thereof as part of his seventh annual progress report.**

26. In paragraph 22 of his sixth annual progress report, the Secretary-General recalled General Assembly resolutions 61/251 and 62/87, pursuant to which he was

requested to explore ways to increase procurement opportunities for vendors from developing countries and countries with economies in transition. However, the report contains little information on the concrete measures taken in that regard and, upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that Skanska had been unable to use any subcontractors from developing countries, primarily because non-local labour costs were prohibitively high. **The Advisory Committee stresses the need for compliance with the provisions of the aforementioned resolutions. Detailed information on the specific steps taken to that end should be presented in the Secretary-General's seventh annual progress report.**

27. With regard to donations, the Advisory Committee recalls that, in its resolutions 57/292, 60/256 and 61/251, the General Assembly encouraged the Secretary-General to seek donations for the capital master plan. Upon enquiry, the Committee was informed that a donation policy had been developed and had been circulated to Member States in a note verbale. Under the terms of that policy, Member States are invited to make cash donations towards renovating certain spaces in the complex. Their contributions would be publicly acknowledged by the presence of a plaque in the space in question.

28. **The Advisory Committee is supportive of the donation policy, but takes the view that the Secretary-General should consider broadening its scope to include donations in kind that are compatible with project specifications, for instance of technical equipment and other fixtures and fittings. Donations received should, to the extent possible, be used to defray the costs of the project, including associated costs (see sect. IV below), and, in order to ensure transparency, all donations should be documented and reported to the General Assembly as part of the Secretary-General's annual progress reports on the capital master plan.**

29. The Secretary-General indicated in paragraph 34 of his report that, in order to provide for improved security of the Headquarters complex, certain changes to the garage would be required that would result in the permanent elimination of approximately 350 parking spaces. The Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that in order to comply with Headquarters minimum operating security standards, as well as with relevant international security and safety standards, underground parking directly beneath the General Assembly Building would no longer be permitted. **The Advisory Committee is cognizant of the need for improved security within the complex. However, the elimination of such a large number of parking spaces cannot fail to disrupt the activities of the staff and the members of the Permanent Missions. Accordingly, the Secretary-General should explore alternative solutions, such as relocating the parking garage to another part of the basement. If, however, it proves impossible to identify a viable alternative, the Secretary-General should make every effort to mitigate the adverse effects of the measure.**

30. **The Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly take note of the progress made since the issuance of the fifth annual progress report and requests the Secretary-General to continue reporting on the status of the project, the schedule, the projected completion cost, the status of contributions, the working capital reserve, the status of the advisory board and the letter of credit, as well as on the other issues highlighted by the Committee in the preceding paragraphs, in his next progress report. Updated information on the**

**cash position of the capital master plan fund and the working capital reserve, as well as on the status of contributions and expenditures, should be provided to the Assembly for its consideration of this question. Lastly, the Committee emphasizes the critical importance of close cooperation among the key departments involved in the capital master plan at every stage of the project and encourages the Secretary-General to continue monitoring its implementation.**

## IV. Associated costs related to the capital master plan

31. The Secretary-General's report on associated costs related to the capital master plan (A/63/582) was submitted in response to the request of the General Assembly contained in its resolution 62/87. As the Secretary-General indicated in paragraph 1 of his report, during the construction period of the plan, temporary increases in staffing and operational costs will be required in certain parts of the Secretariat that will support the construction activities. In the above-mentioned resolution, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to make every effort to absorb such costs within the approved budget of his capital master plan. However, despite the efforts undertaken to that effect, the Secretary-General has determined that such absorption will not be possible without an adverse effect on the project itself (ibid., para. 3).

32. The Advisory Committee was informed that, on 5 June 2008, the Secretary-General wrote to the President of the General Assembly to inform him that failure to proceed with elements of the associated costs would delay the core capital master plan project. The cost of such delays is currently estimated at $14 million per month. As a result of the above-mentioned letter, and pending consideration by the Assembly of the Secretary-General's report on associated costs, a limited financial commitment authority in the amount of $9.5 million was established on 18 July 2008, drawing on the available cash balance in the capital master plan account. A further commitment authority in the amount of $9.8 million was established on 13 January 2009.

33. The Secretary-General has determined that associated costs estimated at $185,997,400 gross ($176,569,000 net) would be required for the period 2008-2013 for four departments, namely, the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management, the Department of Public Information, the Office of Central Support Services of the Department of Management and the Department of Safety and Security. The estimated additional requirements for the biennium 2008-2009 amount to $38,191,200 gross ($35,816,700 net). Table 3 of the Secretary-General's report summarizes those requirements by organizational unit and by object of expenditure.

34. **The Advisory Committee believes that, with almost four years remaining until the projected completion date of the capital master plan, it is premature to conclude that some or all of the associated costs cannot be absorbed within the approved project budget, particularly since, going forward, favourable market conditions may give rise to significant cost reductions (see para. 6 above). The Committee also has some concerns about the way in which the request for additional resources to meet the associated costs has been presented. In particular, a number of the requirements listed in the report do not relate directly to the capital master plan but rather to ongoing capital improvements,**

**and thus the Committee is of the view that, without prejudice to the relative merits of the requests themselves, they should not be considered as associated costs. Associated costs should not be investment costs or long-term commitments. The Committee also considers that it is too early to take any decision on the estimated resource requirements for the next two bienniums (2010-2011 and 2012-2013). Accordingly, the Committee recommends that the Secretary-General submit the estimated resource requirements for associated costs related to the capital master plan for the bienniums 2010-2011 and 2012-2013 in the context of the budget proposals for those bienniums (see para. 61 below). For that reason, the Committee has not commented in detail on the specific proposals relating to the bienniums 2010-2011 and 2012-2013 in the paragraphs below.**

## A. Department for General Assembly and Conference Management

35. In paragraph 10 of his report, the Secretary-General detailed the projected requirements for the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management, which amount to an estimated $2,810,900 for the duration of the project under other staff costs. The estimated resource requirements for associated costs for the current biennium amount to $995,300. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the additional resources would be used to cover the cost of temporary staff positions equivalent to two Information Systems Officers (P-3) and four Records Management Assistants (General Service (Other level)) for a period of 18 months, as well as five Information and Communications Technology Technicians (General Service (Other level)) for a period of three months.

36. In response to concerns expressed by the Advisory Committee regarding the need for additional, dedicated information and communications technology (ICT) capacity within the Department, representatives of the Secretary-General explained that the Department hosts, maintains and runs many mission-critical, conference-specific databases and systems, such as e-Meets and e-Doc, and is therefore responsible for providing all first-level support for those systems. Accordingly, the existing staffing complement of the Department's Information and Communications Technology Section (1 P-5 and 16 General Service (Other level) staff) is fully occupied and will be unable to deal with the additional workload generated by the capital master plan. The Committee was informed that, for the duration of the plan, the temporary assistance requested would be responsible, inter alia, for ensuring that staff spread across eight locations receive adequate ICT support services. During the 90-day relocation phase, the five additional ICT Technicians would perform the following functions: assigning Transmission Control Protocol/Internet Protocol (TCP/IP) addresses; reconfiguring network shared devices; validating mapping of network drives; and checking access to information system and information resources.

37. **The Advisory Committee is of the view that the request for $995,300 submitted by the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management for the biennium 2008-2009 is reasonable and therefore recommends that the General Assembly approve it, on the understanding that every effort will be made to absorb the additional requirements.**

## B. Department of Public Information

38. In paragraphs 11 and 12 of his report, the Secretary-General set out the estimated requirements for the Department of Public Information, which amount to $33,858,900 for the period 2008-2013. The bulk of those resources ($30,035,800) would be required for 2010-2013 and would be used to replace the current obsolete broadcast equipment with an integrated system that represents the latest technology and standards in the industry. The amount of $3,823,100 required for the biennium 2008-2009 would be used for consultancy services ($3,504,000) to assist in the development of the aforementioned system, as well as for contractual services ($319,100) for the reconfiguration of one radio studio for the new International Broadcast Centre and for audio-visual archivists to work on the inventory, appraisal, selection, classification, retention, disposal and indexing of audio-visual records.

39. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the Organization's broadcast equipment had been obsolete for several years owing, inter alia, to the fact that the core technology of the current system uses analog equipment whereas the majority of broadcasters now use digital formats. The Committee was also informed that approximately half the estimated cost of the broadcast facility would be in the installation. Thus, to avoid double expenditure, the Department of Public Information had delayed the replacement of core broadcast systems for three bienniums so that the new systems could be installed at the facility's new location on the first floor of the renovated Conference Building. It was explained that it would be impractical to consider relocating the existing equipment as it had far exceeded its normal serviceable life, was no longer supported by the manufacturers and spare parts were no longer available. Furthermore, liability concerns would make it almost impossible to find a contractor willing to undertake the relocation exercise. It was also pointed out that, to ensure uninterrupted service during the renovation period, the new facility would have to be up and running before the current one could be decommissioned.

40. As to the additional requirements requested for audio-visual archiving, the Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that the legacy film/video collection of the Organization was vast. In anticipation of the capital master plan, the Department of Public Information had acquired a tape management system that would be integrated with a digital system. Those systems would allow the Department to organize its holdings during the capital master plan when film, video and audio materials would be moved. The Committee was also informed, however, that the two existing General Service staff members working in the audio-visual library had neither the specialized skills nor the time needed to index and preserve the collection and ensure that it remained accessible to researchers.

41. **The Advisory Committee is of the view that the broadcast facility is an invaluable asset to the Organization since it provides an interface with the world's media and enables all internal communications. The Committee therefore agrees that the facility's antiquated equipment is in urgent need of modernization. Although the Committee has doubts as to whether, strictly speaking, the resources requested can be regarded as associated costs related to the capital master plan, since the need to upgrade the broadcast facility existed long before the capital master plan was conceived, it nevertheless recommends approval of the amount of $3,504,000 requested for the biennium 2008-2009 for consultancy services, on the understanding that every effort will be made to**

**absorb the additional requirements and that consultants will be used only where no in-house capacity exists. In view of the historical significance of the Organization's audio-visual archives, the Committee also recommends approval of the amount of $319,100 for, inter alia, audio-visual archivists.**

## C. Office of Central Support Services

42. In paragraphs 13 to 20 of his report, the Secretary-General details the estimated associated costs for the Office of Central Support Services. Resources estimated at $97,121,800 would be required for the duration of the renovation project. Of that amount, an estimated $18,963,100 would be required for the biennium 2008-2009.

43. The Advisory Committee was informed that the bulk of the estimated resource requirements for the period 2008-2013 ($67,344,200) was related to furniture and equipment, including, as indicated in paragraph 14 of the Secretary-General's report, office furniture for approximately 4,500 staff, as well as conference room chairs and furniture in lobbies, lounge areas and informal meeting rooms. For the biennium 2008-2009, an estimated amount of $5,191,700 would be required, including furniture for 300 staff moving to the Secretariat basements ($2,100,000) and new lockers for 200 contractors without desk space in the office ($160,000).

44. The Advisory Committee understands that it will be necessary to purchase new furniture to fit out the renovated premises. **However, with regard to temporary relocations, the Committee believes that expenditure should be limited by ensuring that, where feasible, existing furniture is utilized.**

45. The Office of Central Support Services is also requesting an estimated $6,807,400 for the duration of the project under other staff costs. Of that amount, $1,884,100 relates to the biennium 2008-2009. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that those resources would be used to fund the following 13 temporary positions: one Capital Master Plan Team Project Coordinator (P-5); one Records Management Officer (P-3); one Information Systems Officer (P-3); one Technical Coordination Officer (P-3); one Buildings Management Officer (P-2); one Associate Office Space Planning Officer (P-2); one Associate Architect (P-2); one Technical and Administrative Assistant (General Service (Principal level)); one Facilities Management Assistant (General Service (Principal level)); one Records Management Assistant (General Service (Other level)); one Administration Assistant (General Service (Other level)); and two Information Technology Assistants (General Service (Other level)). The Advisory Committee was also informed that the resources required to fund the two General Service (Other level) Information Technology Assistants would be allocated to the newly established Office of Information and Communications Technology. That arrangement is discussed in further detail in paragraph 47 below.

46. **The Advisory Committee has reservations about the level of temporary assistance requested by the Office of Central Support Services.** In the Committee's view, some of the positions listed in paragraph 45 above, in particular the Capital Master Plan Team Project Coordinator (P-5), who would be responsible for the overall planning, coordination and supervision of the Facilities and Commercial Services Division's capital master plan team, appear to be mission critical and, as such, should already have been provided for in the budget of the

capital master plan. Other positions requested, for instance the Records Management Officer (P-3), seem to entail functions that could be performed by existing staff members, either in the Office of Central Support Services or elsewhere in the Secretariat.

47. With particular reference to the three temporary ICT-related positions, the Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that following the establishment of the Office of Information and Communications Technology, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 63/262, the Information and Technology Services Division of the Office of Central Support Services was fully integrated into the new Office, and that, accordingly, the latter had assumed overall responsibility for dealing with the ICT-related aspects of the capital master plan. The Committee was provided with a breakdown of the portion of the associated costs that would be required by the new Office (see annex I). Those costs include funding for the two above-mentioned Information Technology Assistants (General Service (Other level)), but not for the P-3 Information Systems Officer. Upon enquiry, the Committee was informed that the functions of that position, which include the management of system support to electronic data, did not fall within the purview of the Office of Information and Communications Technology, since that Office did not carry out the specific functions related to conference support systems. **Nevertheless, the Advisory Committee is of the view that it should be possible to take advantage of the opportunities for centralization and integration of ICT services afforded by the recent establishment of the Office of Information and Communications Technology to assign all the ICT functions associated with the capital master plan to existing staff members.**

48. In paragraphs 18 to 20 of his report, the Secretary-General indicates that total resources estimated at $10,070,900 would be required for ICT services. After having subtracted the amount required under other staff costs ($1,210,400), the remaining resources would be used, inter alia, for contractual and consultancy services for the migration of all ICT applications to the new North Lawn Conference Building and for the acquisition, installation and maintenance of security-related equipment to support the Department of Safety and Security hardware and software requirements for the existing security command centre and a primary security command centre.

49. The Advisory Committee recalls that, in its resolution 63/262, the General Assembly decided not to approve the Secretary-General's proposal for a new secondary data centre. Upon enquiry, the Committee was informed that the Secretary-General, in response to the request of the General Assembly in that resolution, was currently preparing a report on how the risks associated with the migration of the primary data centre could be mitigated. The Committee understands that the secure migration of data to the new North Lawn Conference Building is an essential component of the capital master plan. However, in the absence of a secondary data centre, it is clear that the migration exercise cannot proceed as planned and that alternative solutions must be sought. **In the Advisory Committee's view, it is difficult to judge the level of resources required until a viable solution is agreed upon. Accordingly, the Committee encourages the Secretary-General to identify such a solution in the most expeditious manner.**

50. **The Advisory Committee notes that, by the time the General Assembly considers the request, in March 2009 at the earliest, only nine months of the biennium will remain. For that reason, and for the reasons outlined in the**

**preceding paragraphs, the Committee recommends a reduction of 40 per cent in the resources requested for general temporary assistance for the Office of Central Support Services and the Office of Information and Communications Technology, as well as a corresponding reduction in related non-post resources, for the biennium 2008-2009.**

## D. Department of Safety and Security

51. In paragraph 21 of his report on associated costs, the Secretary-General indicated that resources amounting to $42,777,400 would be required for the Department of Safety and Security for the duration of the project. Of that amount, an estimated $12,035,200 would be needed during the biennium 2008-2009.

52. According to the Secretary-General, the bulk of the resources requested relate to a temporary security contingent to provide security coverage in accordance with minimum operating security standards related to swing space locations and construction activity at the North Lawn and the Secretariat Buildings. The temporary contingent includes eight Professional positions (1 Capital Master Plan Security Coordinator (P-5); 1 Capital Master Plan Security and Planning Operations Officer (P-4); 1 Capital Master Plan Information Technology Security Liaison Officer (P-4); 1 Capital Master Plan Safety Officer/Code Expert (P-3); 1 Capital Master Plan Physical Security Officer (P-3); 1 Capital Master Plan Compliance/Quality Control/Host Country Security Liaison Officer (P-3); 1 Capital Master Plan Loss Prevention and Investigation Officer (P-3); and 1 Administrative Officer), six General Service (Other level) positions and 93 Security Officer positions. The increased number of security officers would generate additional costs for uniforms, substance and other psychological testing, training, ammunition supplies, storage and locker services, communication costs and canine supplies. In addition, office automation equipment, security equipment, vehicles and trailers would be required, as well as X-ray equipment and metal detectors at the new entry points created by the construction project.

53. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was provided with organization charts of the Department of Safety and Security as a whole (annex II.A) and of the Security and Safety Service at Headquarters (annex II.B), which illustrate the proposed distribution of the temporary positions requested by the Secretary-General. The Committee was also informed that, following the Secretary-General's decision to establish a limited commitment authority for the associated costs (see para. 32 above), the Department had issued vacancy announcements for some of those positions. To date, the Capital Master Plan Security Coordinator position (P-5), the Security and Planning Operations Officer position (P-4), the Administrative Officer position (P-3) and two General Service positions have been filled. In addition, 25 Security Officers were recruited in November 2008 and have been deployed to cover access control functions related to the capital master plan. A further 39 Security Officers were due to begin their basic recruitment training on 2 February 2009.

54. **With regard to the Professional positions requested, the Advisory Committee is of the view that their number could be reduced, since some of the proposed functions duplicate existing capacity.** For instance, the Committee was informed that the Capital Master Plan Loss Prevention and Investigation Officer

(P-3) would be responsible for implementing a system for reporting and investigation of incidents related to theft/loss/damage of United Nations materials and property and injury to staff associated with the capital master plan. He/she would also be required to ensure that theft/loss related, inter alia, to contractors' equipment is dealt with by the contractor and not the responsibility of the United Nations. The Committee points out that the Department of Safety and Security has an established Special Investigations Unit that addresses theft and loss, among other issues. The Committee further points out that the Department also has a Physical Security Unit. It should therefore be possible to incorporate the functions of the proposed Capital Master Plan Physical Security Officer (P-3), which include responsibility for all construction site physical security issues and for ensuring the accuracy of proposals presented for perimeter and interior hardening and electronic security systems, into the duties of the existing staff of that Unit.

55. The Advisory Committee requested, but did not receive, information detailing the basis for the Department's determination that it would need an additional 93 security officers for the duration of the capital master plan. Such information, including an indication of the deployment of current and proposed additional security officers by locations, should be provided to the General Assembly for its consideration of this question. **The Advisory Committee is supportive of the Secretary-General's efforts to strengthen the safety and security of United Nations premises, and is cognizant of the additional demands that will be placed upon the Security and Safety Service as a result of the relocation of Secretariat staff to multiple off-campus locations for the duration of the project. Nevertheless, it takes the view that, absent a fully justified proposal, and given the fact that reduced requirements for security in the Secretariat and Conference Buildings during the renovation could conceivably allow for the redeployment of some existing staff, it should be possible to lower the overall associated costs for the Department by recruiting fewer security officers. This, in turn, would result in proportionately lower requirements under contractual services, general operating expenses, supplies and materials and furniture and equipment. The Committee trusts that the Secretary-General will take the necessary steps to ensure that the temporary Security Officer positions requested are not retained beyond the completion date of the capital master plan.**

56. **The Advisory Committee is also of the view that the resources requested for training could be further reduced by recruiting individuals who have already been trained and certified in construction site safety and security.**

57. **For the reasons outlined in the preceding paragraphs, and in view of the timing of the General Assembly's consideration of the proposal (see para. 50 above), the Advisory Committee recommends a reduction of 40 per cent in the resources requested for general temporary assistance for the Department of Safety and Security, as well as a corresponding reduction in related non-post resources, for the biennium 2008-2009.**

# V. Actions to be taken by the General Assembly

58. In paragraph 23 (a) of his report, the Secretary-General requested the General Assembly to approve the overall level of associated costs estimated at $185,997,400 gross ($176,569,000 net). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that, while the Secretary-General was confident that the estimates had addressed all the possible requirements for the associated costs over the project lifetime, he could not rule out the possibility of unforeseen additional costs over the next four years. **Accordingly, and in light of the observations and recommendations set out in the preceding paragraphs, the Advisory Committee does not recommend approval of the overall level of associated costs at this time.**

59. In paragraph 23 (b) of his report, the Secretary-General requested the General Assembly to approve the total associated costs for the biennium 2008-2009 in the amount of $35,816,700 net ($38,191,200 gross). **In light of the observations and recommendations set out in the preceding paragraphs, the Advisory Committee recommends approval of a total amount of $30,272,400 net ($31,768,700 gross), broken down as follows:**

> **$995,300 under section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management; $3,823,100 under section 27, Public information; $13,356,100 under section 28D, Office of Central Support Services; $4,521,600 under section 32, Construction, alteration, improvement and major maintenance; $7,576,300 under section 33, Safety and Security; and $1,496,300 under section 35, Staff assessment, to be offset by an equivalent amount of income under income section 1, Income from staff assessment, of the programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009.**

60. **With regard to the request contained in paragraph 23 (c) of the Secretary-General's report, the Advisory Committee is of the view that it is for the General Assembly to decide whether, for the biennium 2008-2009, in order to meet the associated costs for the capital master plan, the provisions for the application of credits under regulations 3.2 (d), 5.3 and 5.4 of the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations should be suspended in respect of the amount of $31,768,700 gross ($30,272,400 net).**

61. **Lastly, with regard to the request contained in paragraph 23 (d) of the Secretary-General's report, the Advisory Committee sees no reason to note in advance a preliminary estimate for coming bienniums. It therefore recommends that the requirements for associated costs related to the capital master plan for the bienniums 2010-2011 and 2012-2013 be submitted in the proposed programme budgets for those bienniums.**

# Annex I

## Breakdown of the portion of associated costs allocated to the budget of the Office of Information and Communications Technology

| | *2008* | *2009* | *2008-2009* | *2010* | *2011* | *2012* | *2010-2012* | *2008-2012* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Other staff costs | | | | | | | | |
| General temporary assistance[a] | 0 | 153 800 | 153 800 | 153 800 | 153 800 | 153 800 | 461 400 | 615 200 |
| **Subtotal — other staff costs** | **0** | **153 800** | **153 800** | **153 800** | **153 800** | **153 800** | **461 400** | **615 200** |
| Consultant | | | | | | | | |
| Consultant | 0 | 24 000 | 24 000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 24 000 |
| **Subtotal — consultant** | **0** | **24 000** | **24 000** | **0** | **0** | **0** | **0** | **24 000** |
| Contractual services | | | | | | | | |
| Training and retraining | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Contractual engineering | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Data-processing services | 0 | 1 519 733 | 1 519 733 | 483 200 | 483 200 | 483 200 | 1 449 600 | 2 969 333 |
| **Subtotal — contractual services** | **0** | **1 519 733** | **1 519 733** | **483 200** | **483 200** | **483 200** | **1 449 600** | **2 969 333** |
| General operating expenses | | | | | | | | |
| Rental of premises | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Data processing and office automation | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Other specialized services | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Miscellaneous maintenance services | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **Subtotal — general operating expenses** | **0** | **0** | **0** | **0** | **0** | **0** | **0** | **0** |
| Furniture and equipment | | | | | | | | |
| Office furniture and equipment | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Vehicle | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| **Subtotal — furniture and equipment** | **0** | **0** | **0** | **0** | **0** | **0** | **0** | **0** |
| Improvement to premises[b] | | | | | | | | |
| Improvement to premises | 0 | 2 078 100 | 2 078 100 | 2 289 100 | 0 | 1 500 000 | 3 789 100 | 5 867 200 |
| **Subtotal — improvement to premises** | **0** | **2 078 100** | **2 078 100** | **2 289 100** | **0** | **1 500 000** | **3 789 100** | **5 867 200** |
| **Total — non-post** | **0** | **3 775 633** | **3 775 633** | **2 926 100** | **637 000** | **2 137 000** | **5 700 100** | **9 475 733** |

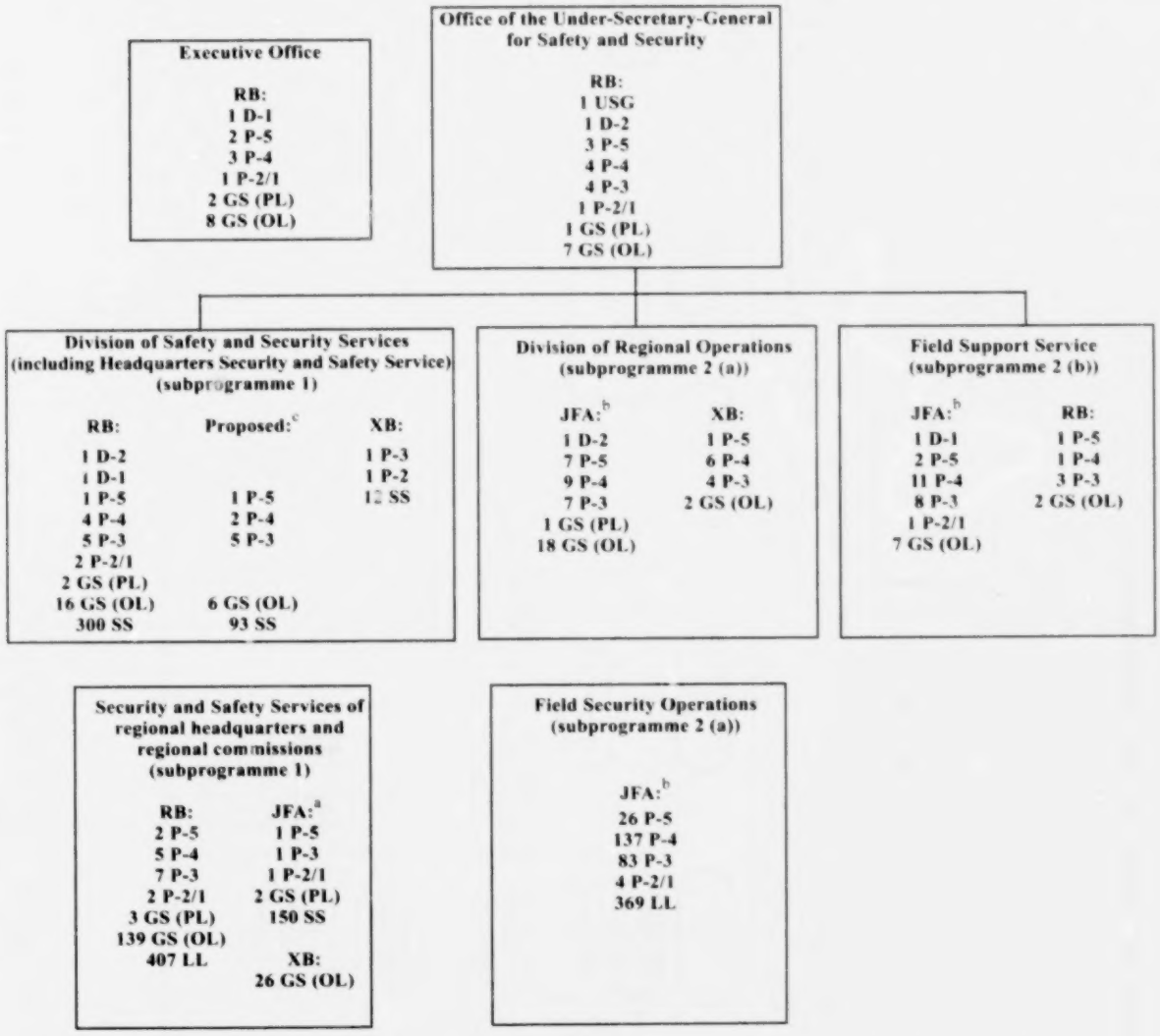
[a] Two IT assistants (General Service (Other level)).

[b] To be issued under section 32, Construction, alteration, improvement and major maintenance.

# Annex II

## Organization charts

### A. Department of Safety and Security: organizational structure and post distribution for the biennium 2008-2009



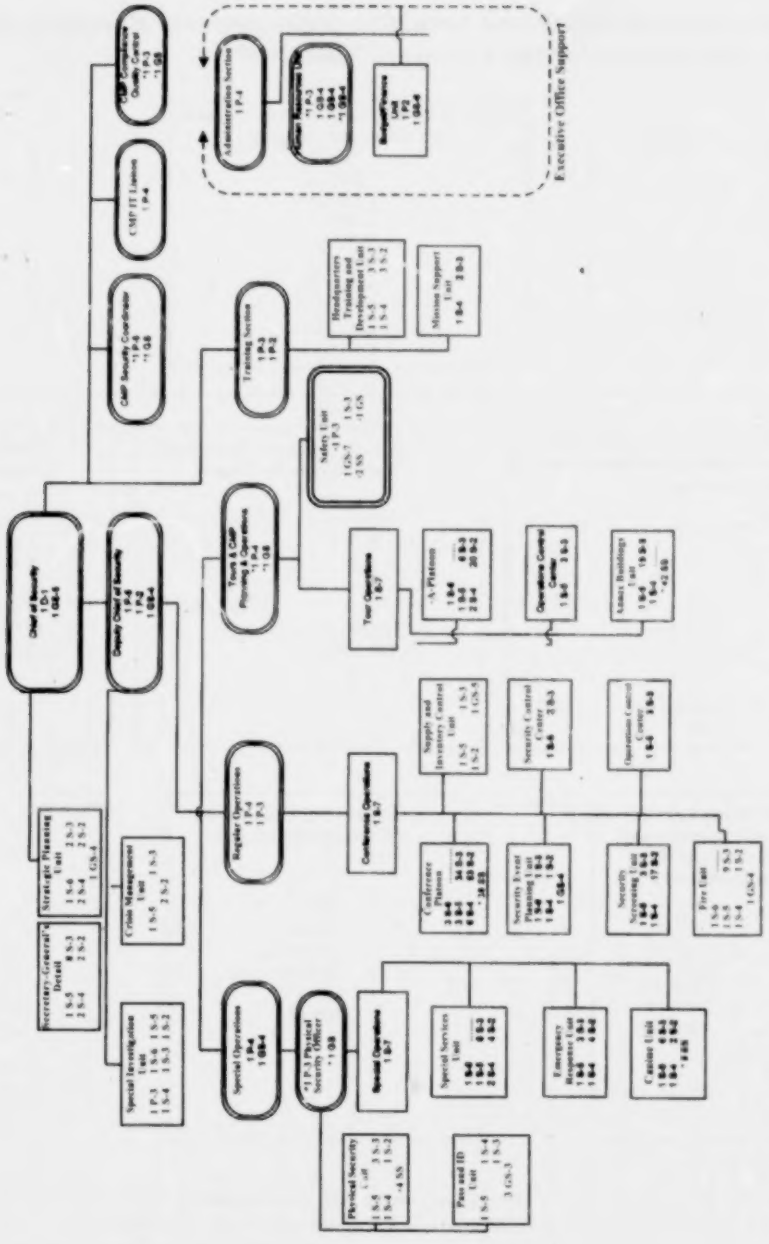

*Abbreviations*: RB, regular budget; JFA, jointly financed activities; XB, extrabudgetary; USG, Under-Secretary-General; GS, General Service; PL, Principal level; OL, Other level; SS, Security Service; LL, Local level.

[a] Jointly financed by all Vienna International Centre-based organizations relating to the Security and Safety Section, Vienna.

[b] Jointly financed by all the organizations participating in the security management system in the field.

[c] New general temporary assistance positions proposed by the Secretary-General in his report on associated costs related to the capital master plan (A/63/582).

## B. Security and Safety Service: Headquarters




* Proposed new capital master plan positions: 8 Professional, 6 General Service and 93 Security and Safety posts.

United Nations A/63/737

General Assembly

Distr.: General
23 February 2009

Original: English

**Sixty-third session**
Agenda item 117
**Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations**

# Vacant posts in the Office of Internal Oversight Services

## Report of the Independent Audit Advisory Committee

*Summary*

The present report reflects the observations and recommendations of the Independent Audit Advisory Committee on the issue of the high number of vacant posts in the Office of Internal Oversight Services. The issue was discussed at the fifth session of the Committee, held from 17 to 19 February 2009, and it was decided that, with regard to the issue, the Committee would exercise its responsibility, in accordance with its terms of reference, to report key findings and matters of importance to the Assembly at any time.

09-24705 (E) 240209

## Background

1. The responsibilities of the Independent Audit Advisory Committee, as set out in its terms of reference (resolution 61/275, annex), include the responsibility to advise the Assembly on the effectiveness, efficiency and impact of the audit activities and other oversight functions of the Office of Internal Oversight Services.

2. It came to the attention of the Committee at its fifth session, held from 17 to 19 February 2009, that the Office of Internal Oversight Services had vacancies for over 27 per cent of its authorized posts. The vacancies are at various stages in the extensive United Nations recruitment process. The Committee notes that the General Assembly also raised the issue in its resolution 63/265, in which it expressed concern over a number of vacancies in the Investigations Division of the Office of Internal Oversight Services since the beginning of 2008, and requested the Secretary-General to make every effort to fill those vacancies as a matter of priority, in accordance with the existing relevant provisions governing recruitment in the United Nations.

3. Of particular concern to the Committee is the fact that all three Director-level positions within the Office of Internal Oversight Services are vacant and are currently encumbered by staff appointed in an acting capacity. In this regard, the Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services, in a letter dated 19 December 2008, brought the issue of the recruitment of the Director of the Investigations Division to the attention of the Committee for advice and comment.

4. The Committee's observations and recommendations are generally incorporated in an annual report or other reports on the budget of the Office of Internal Oversight Services. However, when issues of significant concern emerge, the Committee, in accordance with its terms of reference, has a responsibility to report key findings and matters of importance to the Assembly at any time.

## Observations and recommendations

5. The Committee's main concern is that the high vacancy rate within the Office of Internal Oversight Services will have an adverse impact on the capacity and ability of the Office to accomplish its programme of work. The programme of work is risk-based, which means that if the workplan is not completed, certain risks in the Organization may not be covered by the Office.

6. Given the length of time that recruiting staff to posts appears to take, there is a risk that the programme of work of the Office may not be accomplished owing to insufficient staff capacity. The Committee believes that this is a serious concern in terms of the effectiveness of the Office.

7. Taking into account the concern of the General Assembly as stated in its resolution 63/265, the Committee advises that all possibilities within the United Nations regulations and rules be explored, including the judicious use of temporary staff to minimize the adverse impact of vacant posts on the completion of the programme of work of the Office of Internal Oversight Services.

8. There is disagreement between management and the Office of Internal Oversight Services regarding the appropriate recruitment and selection process for

posts at the Director level. The current contention involves the recruitment and selection process for the Director of the Investigations Division.

9. The Committee is concerned that the Investigations Division is at a point at which strong leadership and management are critical: 175 cases have been transferred to the Investigations Division from the Procurement Task Force, and a major restructuring of the Division is awaiting a final decision by the General Assembly. Therefore, the Committee believes that there should be a streamlined and expedited process for filling this post. In this respect, the Committee notes the decision of the General Assembly to provide "operational independence" to the Office of Internal Oversight Services under resolution 48/218 B and the Secretary-General's delegation of authority contained in administrative instruction ST/AI/401 of January 1995, which, inter alia, provides that "the Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services will have authority to appoint all staff members whose appointments are limited to service with the Office up to the D-2 level".

10. In this regard, the Committee has provided advice to assist in the resolution of the matter. However, to date the matter remains unresolved. The Committee remains available to provide further assistance, as required.

11. After careful consideration of this matter by the Committee and in the light of the above-mentioned concerns, the Committee unanimously agreed to bring the issue of the high number of vacant posts in the Office of Internal Oversight Services and, in particular, that of Director of the Investigations Division, to the attention of the General Assembly. **The Committee urges that, in the Organization's best interests, immediate action be taken to have the vacant posts filled in a streamlined and expedited manner. This will help to ensure that the Office of Internal Oversight Services can perform its mandated functions effectively and efficiently.**

(*Signed*) David M. **Walker**
Chairperson, Independent Audit Advisory Committee

(*Signed*) Vijayendra N. **Kaul**
Vice-Chairperson, Independent Audit Advisory Committee

(*Signed*) Vadim V. **Dubinkin**
Member, Independent Audit Advisory Committee

(*Signed*) John F. S. **Muwanga**
Member, Independent Audit Advisory Committee

(*Signed*) Adrian P. **Strachan**
Member, Independent Audit Advisory Committee

United Nations A/63/738–S/2009/110

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
24 February 2009
English
Original: Arabic

General Assembly
Sixty-third session
Agenda item 15
The situation in the Middle East

Security Council
Sixty-fourth year

# Identical letters dated 20 February 2009 from the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I transmit to you herewith a statistical summary of Israeli violations committed from 1 to 16 February 2009 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the sixty-third session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 15, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Nawaf **Salam**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

09-24850 (E) 250209 270209

## Annex to the identical letters dated 20 February 2009 from the Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

## Israeli violations, acts of aggression and other activities from 1 to 16 February 2009

### Air violations

On 3 February 2009, between 0633 and 1300 hours, an Israeli enemy reconnaissance aircraft violated Lebanese airspace, entering over Naqurah and heading north. It circled over Beirut before leaving over Naqurah.

On 4 February 2009:

- Between 0930 and 1120 hours, two Israeli enemy warplanes violated Lebanese airspace, entering over the occupied Shab'a Farms. They circled over all regions of Lebanon before leaving over Alma al-Sha'b;
- Between 1150 and 1210 hours, two Israeli enemy warplanes violated Lebanese airspace, entering from over the sea off Naqurah. They proceeded north as far as Damur before turning back south and leaving over the sea off Naqurah.

On 6 February 2009:

- Between 0707 and 1850 hours, an Israeli enemy reconnaissance aircraft violated Lebanese airspace, entering over Naqurah. It circled over the Bekaa and the South before leaving over Kafr Killa;
- Between 0945 and 1110 hours, two Israeli enemy warplanes violated Lebanese airspace, entering over the occupied Shab'a Farms. They circled over all regions of Lebanon before leaving over Alma al-Sha'b.

On 9 February 2009, between 1915 and 1920 hours, an Israeli enemy warplane flew at high altitude over the Tibnin area.

On 12 February 2009:

- Between 0640 and 1010 hours, an Israeli enemy reconnaissance aircraft violated Lebanese airspace, entering over Alma al-Sha'b. It circled over areas of the South before leaving over Naqurah;
- Between 1000 and 1125 hours, two Israeli enemy warplanes violated Lebanese airspace, entering over Aytarun and heading north. They circled over all regions of Lebanon before leaving over Rumaysh.

On 14 February 2009:

- Between 0655 and 1907 hours, an Israeli enemy reconnaissance aircraft flew over Alma al-Sha'b; it proceeded to circle over areas of the South before leaving over Naqurah;
- Between 1120 and 1238 hours, two Israeli enemy warplanes violated Lebanese airspace, entering over Dayr Mimas. They circled over all regions of Lebanon before leaving over Alma al-Sha'b.

On 15 February 2009, between 0650 and 1340 hours, an Israeli enemy reconnaissance aircraft violated Lebanese airspace, entering over Naqurah and heading north. It circled over areas of the South before leaving over Rumaysh.

**Sea violations**

On 3 February 2009, at 1855 hours, an Israeli enemy gunboat directed a searchlight towards Lebanese territorial waters between the first and eighth buoys for 12 minutes, to a distance of some 100 metres. The enemy repeated the exercise for one minute between 2100 and 2230 hours.

On 5 February 2009:

- At 1822 hours, from its position at Ra's al-Naqurah, the Israeli enemy directed a searchlight for five seconds towards Lebanese territorial waters between the first and fifth buoys, to a distance of approximately 200 metres. At 1835 hours, the enemy directed a searchlight from a naval vessel towards the same area;
- At 1940 hours, the Israeli enemy fired several bursts of gunfire over a Lebanese fishing vessel located near the third buoy, approximately 50 metres inside Lebanese territorial waters.

On 9 February 2009, at 1815 hours, from its position at Ra's al-Naqurah, the Israeli enemy directed a searchlight for four seconds towards Lebanese territorial waters at the second buoy, to a distance of approximately 100 metres.

On 14 February 2009, at 1925 hours, from its position at Ra's al-Naqurah, the Israeli enemy directed a searchlight for five seconds towards Lebanese territorial waters between the fourth and fifth buoys.

On 16 February 2009, at 1848 hours, from its position at Ra's al-Naqurah, the Israeli enemy thrice directed a searchlight for five seconds towards Lebanese territorial waters at the first buoy, to a distance of approximately 100 metres.

**Acts of aggression in the field**

On 9 February 2009, between 1115 and 1200 hours, the Israeli enemy fired several bursts of light-weapons fire from its Radar position inside the occupied Shab'a Farms towards the perimeter of that position.

On 12 February 2009, at 1645 hours, an enemy Merkava tank atop an earthen berm at the restricted position (Yarun) was observed directing its cannon towards Lebanese territory.

**Israeli activities**

On 2 February 2009, at 1922 hours, within the naval operations area of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), an Israeli enemy Sa'ar 4.5 gunboat remained in a position 25 nautical miles outside Lebanese territorial waters opposite Beirut for a period of one hour. The enemy gunboat left the naval operations area at 2138 hours. At that same time, an unmanned aircraft circled over the area before leaving at 2039 hours. It is believed that the aircraft was operating in coordination with the aforementioned enemy gunboat.

United Nations A/63/739–S/2009/114

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
26 February 2009

Original: English

**General Assembly**
**Sixty-third session**
Agenda items 97, 98 and 99

**Crime prevention and criminal justice**

**International drug control**

**Measures to eliminate international terrorism**

**Security Council**
**Sixty-fourth year**

## Identical letters dated 19 February 2009 from the Permanent Representative of New Zealand to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council

I have the honour, on behalf of members of the Pacific Islands Forum based in New York, to transmit herewith a copy of the conclusions of the regional consultation workshop on measures for the legislative implementation of the legal regime against terrorism in the Pacific region and related technical assistance delivery, held in Suva on 2 and 3 June 2008 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 97, 98 and 99, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Rosemary **Banks**
Permanent Representative

09-25097 (E) 030309

**Annex to the identical letters dated 19 February 2009 from the Permanent Representative of New Zealand to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council**

**Regional Consultation Workshop on measures for the legislative implementation of the legal regime against terrorism in the Pacific region and related technical assistance delivery**

**Suva, 2 and 3 June 2008**

**Organized by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in cooperation with the Pacific Islands Forum secretariat**

## Workshop conclusions

We, the participants of the Regional Consultation Workshop on measures for the legislative implementation of the legal regime against terrorism in the Pacific region and related technical assistance delivery, held in Suva, Fiji, on 2 and 3 June 2008;

Representing the following Pacific Islands Forum countries:

- Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, New Zealand, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, and Tuvalu;

Reaffirming the conclusions of the Regional Consultation Workshop held in Nadi, Fiji, on 25 and 26 June 2007 (A/62/542-S/2007/664);

Acknowledging the ongoing work undertaken by Forum Members in complying with their international obligations and relevant regional instruments relating to counter- terrorism and their determination to continue undertaking the required national action;

Expressing our appreciation to the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) and the 1540 Committee Expert Group for their contributions to the Workshop;

Expressing our appreciation to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the Pacific Islands Forum secretariat (PIFS) for their initiative in organizing this Regional Consultation Workshop;

Have agreed on the following conclusions:

1. Recognize the efforts of participating countries in reviewing their existing domestic laws and developing new counter terrorism legislation;

2. Acknowledge the technical assistance which has been provided by the Terrorism Prevention Branch (TPB) of UNODC, in partnership with the PIFS and other relevant providers of assistance;

3. Welcome the continuing availability of UNODC/TPB and the PIFS to provide on-the-ground and sustained support to the Forum Islands countries and observers and, for this purpose, undertake the following types of activities:

   - National level technical support, advisory services and other required expertise assistance in the legal areas relating to counter-terrorism, especially for the ratification of the counter-terrorism instruments and the legislative incorporation of their provisions into national legislation, including through drafting assistance;

   - National level training for relevant criminal justice (including law enforcement) officials to build counter-terrorism legal capacity for achieving the effective application of the legal regime against terrorism;

   - Regional consultations and workshops for the Pacific Islands countries and observers on specialized substantive legal issues, to foster specialized knowledge and expert capacity to address those issues;

   - Senior policy-level workshops on strengthening the legal regime against terrorism, especially to review progress being made and provide guidance for required further steps pertaining to technical assistance needs and delivery.

4. Recommend Forum Members and observers to continue to draw on the specialized legal and related technical assistance services offered by UNODC/TPB in partnership with the PIFS;

5. Request UNODC to hold, in partnership with the PIFS, further consultations on this issue as required;

6. Take note of the consultations with UNODC, CTED and the 1540 Committee Expert Group, and the continued efforts of participating countries;

7. Recognize that broader law enforcement programs will complement the implementation of the universal counter-terrorism instruments;

8. Request the PIFS to bring the conclusions of this consultation workshop to the attention of the Security Council and the General Assembly of the United Nations, for apprising them of the measures being envisaged for technical assistance delivery to the Pacific Islands countries;

9. Take note of the legal and related technical assistance needs indicated during the bilateral consultations with UNODC by the following countries:

**Cook Islands**

Processes for ratification of the remaining universal counter-terrorism instruments; legislative drafting assistance for implementing legislation. Training for criminal justice and judicial officers on the legal aspects of the universal legal framework.

**Federated States of Micronesia**

Assistance with processes related to the ratification of the remaining counter-terrorism instruments; legislative drafting for implementing legislation.

**Fiji**

Legislative drafting assistance; ongoing training for criminal justice, judicial and other officials on legal elements of the universal instruments.

**Kiribati**

Basic training for law enforcement officers; assistance with drafting of legislation to implement remaining counter-terrorism instruments.

**Nauru**

Training for criminal justice and judicial officers on counter-terrorism issues.

**Niue**

Assistance with processes relating to the ratification of the remaining counter-terrorism instruments; training for criminal justice, judicial, and other officers on legal elements of the counter-terrorism instruments; review of existing counter-terrorism legislation and related legislative drafting.

**Palau**

The review of existing counter-terrorism legislation and advice on legislative amendments necessary to achieve full compliance; assistance with related drafting; assistance with reporting to the relevant United Nations Security Council Committees dealing with counter-terrorism.

**Republic of the Marshall Islands**

Training for criminal justice and judicial officers on counter-terrorism issues.

**Samoa**

Assistance with legislative drafting; ratification processes for the remaining instruments; and training for criminal justice and judicial officers on the legal elements of the universal framework.

**Solomon Islands**

Assistance with processes related to the ratification of the remaining counter-terrorism instruments; training for criminal justice and judicial officers on the legal elements of the universal framework.

**Tuvalu**

Assistance with procedures related to the ratification of the remaining counter-terrorism instruments; training for criminal justice and judicial officers on the legal elements of the universal framework.

United Nations A/63/740

General Assembly

Distr.: General
25 February 2009

Original: English

**Sixty-third session**
Agenda items 40 and 49

**Report of the Economic and Social Council**

**Sustainable development**

## Letter dated 20 February 2009 from the Permanent Representative of Namibia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to inform you that the Government of the Republic of Namibia hosted in Windhoek, on 9 and 10 February 2009, a high-level meeting for the Africa region on the theme "African agriculture in the twenty-first century: meeting the challenges, making a sustainable green revolution".

The meeting, which was co-organized by the Ministry of Environment and Tourism of Namibia and the Division for Sustainable Development of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, was attended by about 120 participants, from both within and outside Africa.

The meeting concluded with the adoption of the Windhoek High-level Ministerial Declaration on African Agriculture in the Twenty-first Century: Meeting the Challenges, Making a Sustainable Green Revolution (see annex).

In this connection, we request that you kindly circulate the present letter and its annex as a document of the United Nations.

(*Signed*) Kaire M. **Mbuende**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

09-24979 (E) 090309

## Annex to the letter dated 20 February 2009 from the Permanent Representative of Namibia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

### Windhoek High-level Ministerial Declaration on African Agriculture in the Twenty-first Century: Meeting the Challenges, Making a Sustainable Green Revolution

1. We, Ministers and Government representatives, having met at the High-level Meeting on "African Agriculture in the 21st Century: Meeting the Challenges, Making a Sustainable Green Revolution", in Windhoek from 9 to 10 February 2009, reaffirm our commitment to sustainable development in Africa and recognizes the critical role of agriculture in the achievement of sustainable development in Africa.

2. We recognize with a sense of urgency the need to achieve the vision of Africa's Heads of State and Government. We are also aware that the vision provides strategic direction to plans and action programmes, including the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) endorsed by the African Union and being implemented by regional bodies and national institutions.

3. We support the call for a uniquely African Green Revolution to help boost agricultural productivity, food production and national food security. We support all efforts to achieve a sustainable green revolution.

4. We recognize that an African green revolution does not depend only on improved seeds and fertilizer but must be built on a range of complementary investments in rural development, many of which will need to be undertaken by the public sector — including rural roads, electricity, health and education.

5. We further recognize the need for an active engagement of the state in supporting agriculture, especially small-scale agriculture. The escalation and volatility in prices facing farmers has highlighted the need for effective institutions to ensure greater price stability. We also emphasize the critical importance of governments in providing rural infrastructure, in supporting agricultural research and development, and in creating an enabling policy environment that provides incentives to innovation and risk taking by farmers.

6. We appreciate the important role of livestock in African agriculture and of mixed crop-livestock systems in providing income and food security and in reducing farmers' risk. We assign a high priority to improving the productivity and sustainability of such systems as well as other systems characteristic of African agriculture.

7. We fully understand that agriculture depends on a variety of ecosystem services for its productivity, including those provided by forests, and that biological diversity in agricultural ecosystems can provide such benefits as resilience to climate, pest and other threats and disturbances.

8. We are convinced that the challenges facing African agriculture need to be addressed with a sense of urgency. There is broad consensus on what the main challenges are and what is needed to confront them, as reflected in the outcomes of the Rome and Madrid conferences on Food Security. What is needed now is the strong political will of governments to take the necessary actions and of the

international community to support those actions by whatever means are appropriate. We have that will.

9. We recognize that we are meeting at a critical juncture in our efforts to address the challenges of achieving internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. We further recognize that we face multiple challenges in our efforts to achieve these goals, including financial crisis, global food crisis, energy as well as the impacts of environmental degradation and the climate change. We are concerned about the negative impacts of these risks on sustained economic growth and sustainable development, particularly in Africa. We believe that these challenges require early and concerted global action. (1)

10. We express our concern at the global food crisis which poses a serious challenge to the fight against poverty and hunger, to the efforts by African countries to attain food security and the goal of reducing by half the number of undernourished people by 2015, as well as, the achievement of other internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. (2)

11. We recognize that agriculture plays a crucial role in addressing the needs of a growing global population and is inextricably linked to poverty eradication, especially in African countries where the majority of the population depend on it for their livelihood. We reiterate that supporting integrated and sustainable agriculture and rural development is essential to achieving food security and food safety in Africa. (3)

12. We also recognize that African countries have taken a number of measures at the national, sub-regional and regional levels to boost agriculture and rural development, including policy responses aimed at reversing the decline in agriculture and boosting production to achieve food security. (4)

13. We further recognize that a sustainable green revolution in Africa is needed if hunger, poverty and environmental degradation trends are to be reversed. African agriculture has to be transformed through an enabling environment of policy, institutions, infrastructure and investment in scientific research, technology development and dissemination. Success in agriculture in Africa further requires provision of the latest scientific knowledge and experience in applying techniques of sustainable land, soil and water management. We emphasize that the green revolution needs to be tailored to the specificities of the continent's highly diverse agro-ecological conditions, farming systems and socio-cultural contexts.

14. We are mindful that African agriculture and rural economies need to be revitalized in ways that are economically, socially and environmentally sustainable. To this end, we recommit ourselves to accelerate progress towards the Maputo Declaration target of raising the share of national budgets devoted to agriculture and rural development to at least 10 per cent and appeal for international support for the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) under the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

15. We call for a concerted and collective response by African countries and the international community, working in partnership to support integrated and sustainable agriculture and rural development approaches, and stress the importance of food security and strengthening the agricultural sector, as set out in, inter alia, the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme of NEPAD. We call upon development partners, including the United Nations system, to increase their

assistance to Africa, in particular to least developed countries and those that are most negatively affected by high food prices. (5)

16. We recognize that Africa has been severely affected by drought, desertification and land degradation and loss of biodiversity. We further recognize that the key to agricultural revitalization and food security is better and sustainable land management, including reclaiming dry and degraded land to make it propitious to agriculture. This would contribute, inter alia, to offering new economic opportunities for enhanced rural development and improved prospects for sustainable livelihoods for affected rural populations while also improving biodiversity conservation. (6)

17. We acknowledge that desertification which poses serious threats to the achievement of sustainable development and to the eradication of poverty and hunger is a global problem that requires a global response through concerted efforts among all member states and concerned stakeholders.

18. We underline the potential of the UNCCD to contribute to addressing food security, particularly by protecting land from becoming degraded, we pledge our commitment to implementing the Ten Year Strategy and Framework and call on donors to enhance financial support for UNCCD, including its fourth strategic objective, and further call for substantial, additional resources for the land degradation focal area during the fifth replenish period of the Global Environment Facility (GEF).

19. We acknowledge the importance of the export of agriculture products for Africa's economic growth as agriculture plays pivotal role in the continent's overall economy. We are concerned by the high dependence on limited number of export commodities, weak technological capacities, inadequate legal and regulatory institutional frameworks and insufficient transport, storage and marketing infrastructure, and policy-induced constraints resulting from trade and macroeconomic policies that are biased against exports of agricultural products. (7)

20. We are concerned that Africa's share of international trade is only 2 per cent, and it's likely to further decrease as result of the current global economic crisis. We underline the important role that trade plays in promoting economic growth. We stress the need to promote Africa's international trade, including through regional integration and greater integration into the global economy and fulfilment of the commitment to a well-functioning, universal, rules-based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system which promotes sustainable development. We commit to redoubling our efforts towards the reinvigoration of the multilateral trade negotiations and to achieve a development-oriented outcome of the Doha Round of the World Trade Organization. We call for stronger national action and international support to build domestic productive competitive export supply capacities, as well as trade support, infrastructure and institutions in African countries. (8)

21. We urge developed countries to support agriculture development in Africa by ensuring greater access to their markets as well as provide support to capacity building of African producers to achieve compliance with relevant international standards.

22. We urge the international community to promote and facilitate access to the development, acquisition, transfer and diffusion of the technologies and

corresponding know-how to African countries and we call for increased technical and financial assistance to African countries for strengthening their national innovation capacity, inter alia, through research and development (R&D) to increase agricultural production and improve competitiveness.

23. We are convinced that enhanced financial and technical support for crop and livestock research and development is a high priority, including on varieties and methods adapted to climate change. We therefore urge the international financial institutions to increase significantly their support to investment in agriculture and rural development in Africa in order to ensure food security, increase incomes and eradicate poverty.

24. We undertake to further the process of African regional trade in order to promote the modernization of agriculture by opening up new markets and realizing scale economies in agricultural input production.

25. We are determined to achieve sustainability of African economies and their integration into the global market in order to reduce the continent's heavy dependence on the extraction, harvesting and export of primary commodities with minimal processing and value addition. We are committed to promoting economic diversification, including through expanded production of high-value agricultural products and the development of industries based on the further processing and value addition to primary products. We encourage international investment, technology and know-how transfer to further this process.

26. We note the growing global demand for biofuels which has opened up significant new opportunities and challenges for African food production. We intend to work to develop our biofuels sectors in ways which are consistent with our own food security and with principles of environmental sustainability and social equity.

27. We underscore the importance of securing agricultural land rights, particularly for small-scale farmers, in ensuring that the poor benefit from the modernization of African agriculture and from its growing integration into world markets. We shall continue to encourage the sustainable land management practices aimed at boosting agricultural productivity. We shall also encourage increased exchange of experiences and know-how both within and beyond the continent.

28. We recognize that women constitute a significant proportion of African substance farming. We are committed to the empowerment of women, including through more secure land tenure, and their full participation in decision-making in areas of agriculture, rural development and resource management.

29. We acknowledge with appreciation the valuable contribution made by major groups, academia, and other experts in promoting African agriculture and emphasize the importance of their continued role in promoting a sustainable green revolution in Africa.

30. We appreciate the participation and support of the UN system in particular the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, international organizations, and civil society in preparing for and contribution to this meeting.

31. Having deliberated carefully and critically on the challenges facing agriculture in Africa and on the way forward to best address those challenges, we offer the following recommendations for consideration by the Commission on Sustainable Development at its 17th session:

a. Governments and international donors should substantially increase financial support to agricultural and livestock research centres in Africa, working to make them more effective and efficient not only in generating innovations but also in diffusing them to farmers.

b. Governments should help small-scale farmers to better manage the various risks they face, including price, weather, climate and natural disaster risks, by mitigating risk, assuming a share of the risk, and promoting the development of agricultural insurance markets.

c. Governments and international institutions should work to rebuild and reorient agricultural extension services, where appropriate, to make greater use of farmer-to-farmer extension, including through field schools for training farmers as extension workers, combining their traditional knowledge with contemporary science and technology.

d. Governments should work with development partners to mobilize investments in needed infrastructure for agriculture and rural development, including irrigation, roads, electricity and communications technologies.

e. Agricultural research institutions should work closely with farmers in developing and applying new technologies, in a process of co-innovation, and should also endeavour to learn from farmers to enhance their own research efforts.

f. Governments may wish to provide subsidized inputs to small-scale farmers as a way of promoting agricultural production and enhanced food security; timely access to inputs and credit is critical.

g. Government policies for agriculture need to encourage strong backward and forward linkages through the development and strengthening of the entire agricultural supply chain, from input, equipment and credit suppliers to marketing institutions.

h. Pre and post harvest technologies should be diffused more widely to enable farmers to realize greater value from their crops.

i. Governments should work to ensure that credit and other financial facilities are more readily available to small-scale farmers, including through loan subsidies and guarantees.

j. Governments should encourage the formation of agricultural cooperatives to enhance farmers' earning power, and farmers' associations to encourage knowledge sharing and technology diffusion.

k. The empowerment of women farmers needs to be enhanced by Governments, including through secure land tenure, recognizing that they are a majority of agricultural producers and make decisions that affect investment and productivity.

l. Governments, in cooperation with the research community and with support from the international donor community, should undertake rigorous comparative assessments of alternative agricultural models and cropping systems in the major agro-ecological zones of Africa.

m. Governments should coordinate agricultural policies across natural resource sectors, for example by developing mutually compatible forests and agricultural policies.

n. Governments should use the UNCCD frameworks and processes to assess and monitor progress made in reclaiming degraded and drylands.

o. Governments should mainstream the ten-year strategy of the UNCCD into their national and regional policy platforms with a view to improving the livelihoods of affected populations and improving affected ecosystems.

p. Governments should implement National Action Plans (UNCCD) and NAPAs (UNFCCC) in a synergistic fashion for adaptation to climate change.

q. Governments should monitor the implementation of the CSD resolutions relevant to agriculture in the African Peer Review Mechanism and consider a focused Regional Interministerial Committee led by Agriculture Ministers.

r. North-South and South-South cooperation should be further enhanced in such areas as biofuels, drylands agriculture and combating desertification.

s. International financial institutions and other funding agencies should, as needed, put in place streamlined procedures for timely disbursal of funds for food and agricultural input purchases.

32. We express our deep appreciation and gratitude to the Government of Namibia for hosting this important meeting.

33. We hereby affirm our wish that this Declaration be presented by the Minister of Environment and Tourism of the Republic of Namibia, as Co-Chair of this meeting, to the 17th Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development.

United Nations A/63/741

General Assembly

Distr.: General
26 February 2009

Original: English

**Sixty-third session**
Agenda item 54
**Operational activities for development**

## Letter dated 30 January 2009 from the Permanent Representative of Qatar to the United Nations addressed to the President of General Assembly

I have the honour to refer to your letter to me dated 20 January 2009, by which you entrusted me, in my capacity as the President of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation, with undertaking the necessary consultations with Member States in accordance with, and for the purpose of implementing, General Assembly resolution 63/233, in particular to convene the High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation.

In the resolution, the General Assembly requested the President of the Assembly to entrust the President of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation with undertaking the necessary consultations with Member States in order to prepare for the proposed Conference, with a view to the Assembly's taking a decision, during its sixty-third session, on the nature, date, objectives and modalities of the Conference, making use of the existing coordination mechanisms of the United Nations system.

I wish to inform you that I have undertaken consultations with Member States. Therefore, I am pleased to attach hereby my report on those consultations (see annex). I would highly appreciate your office making the necessary arrangements for the report to be brought to the attention of the General Assembly, for its consideration, at its sixty-third session.

(*Signed*) Nasser Abdulaziz **Al-Nasser**
Permanent Representative of the State of Qatar
to the United Nations
President of the General Assembly High-level Committee
on South-South Cooperation

09-25040 (E) 110309

**Annex to the letter dated 30 January 2009 from the Permanent Representative of Qatar to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly**

# Report of the President of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation on the High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation

*Summary*

The present report has been prepared in compliance with General Assembly resolution 63/233, in which the Assembly requested the President of the General Assembly to entrust the President of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation with undertaking the necessary consultations with Member States in order to prepare for the High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation, which, according to resolution 62/209, decided to convene no later than the first half of 2009, on the occasion of the thirtieth anniversary of the adoption of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries. The report was prepared with a view to the Assembly's taking a decision, during its sixty-third session, on the nature, date, objectives and modalities of the Conference, making use of the existing coordination mechanisms of the United Nations system. The report summarizes the consultations undertaken by the President of the High-level Committee and provides the outcomes and recommendations of the consultations.

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# I. Introduction

1. The 1978 United Nations Conference on Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries remains a pivotal event in South-South cooperation, and the Buenos Aires Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries,[a] adopted by the Conference, has served to guide South-South cooperation policies and practices in the development sphere for the past 30 years. During this period, the international development scenario has been focused towards new horizons. It was in recognition of the changing nature of cooperation and capacities in the South, as well as the need to strengthen and further invigorate South-South cooperation, that the General Assembly at its sixty-second session, in resolution 62/209 of 19 December 2007, chose to mark the thirtieth anniversary of the Buenos Aires conference with the convening of a High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation. This proposal stemmed from the discussions and decisions of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation at its fifteenth session, in 2007, as endorsed by the Assembly at its sixty-second session later that same year.

2. The thirtieth anniversary of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action comes at a time when South-South cooperation has acquired greater prominence, thanks to the significant gains achieved in many parts of the developing world. Some countries of the South are now hubs of technological innovation, foreign direct investment and high-quality education. Despite these gains, however, there remain pockets where extreme poverty and lingering deprivation seem intractable. South-South cooperation with its emphasis on mutual learning and experience-sharing benefits in addition from the fact that partnering nations often share similar conditions or have previous experience of confronting similar challenges. This sharing of hard-won knowledge brings with it a deep sense of solidarity among countries of the South, which forms the philosophical basis for South-South cooperation, standing alongside other practical considerations.

3. In recognition of the above, the General Assembly, in its resolution 62/209 (para. 13) decided to convene a High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation on the occasion of the thirtieth anniversary of the adoption of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries, no later than the first half of 2009, and requested that the President of the Assembly entrust the President of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation with undertaking the necessary consultations with Member States in order to prepare for the proposed conference, with a view to the Assembly's taking a decision, during its sixty-second session, on the nature, date, objectives and modalities of the conference, making use of the existing coordination mechanisms of the United Nations system.

4. In a letter dated 22 May 2008, the President of the sixty-second session of the General Assembly requested the President of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation to undertake the necessary consultations in accordance with the above-mentioned Assembly resolution.

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[a] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries, Buenos Aires, 30 August-12 September 1978* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.78.II.A.11 and corrigendum), chap. I.

5. The President of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation submitted a report on the requested consultations (see A/C.2/63/7, annex I, attachment III). It considered the status of the consultations with Member States and provided a summary of the main conclusions and recommendations of the consultations, for review by the General Assembly.

6. Following deliberations at its sixty-third session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 63/233, in which it reiterated the request contained in resolution 62/209 (para. 13), with a view to its taking a decision at its sixty-third session.

7. In a letter dated 20 January 2009, the President of the sixty-third session of the General Assembly requested the President of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation to undertake the necessary consultations in accordance with General Assembly resolution 63/233. The present report is submitted in compliance with that request.

## II. Consultations in preparation for the Conference

8. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 63/233 and the aforementioned letter of the President of the sixty-third session of the Assembly, the President of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation undertook the necessary consultations with Member States in order to prepare for the Conference, with a view to:

(a) Determining the nature and scope, objectives, date and venue as well as the modalities for the Conference;

(b) Proposing the desired level of participation and organizational structure of the Conference;

(c) Coming up with an agreed list of priority issues and themes for consideration at the Conference;

(d) Determining the basic documents to be prepared by the Secretariat for the Conference;

(e) Making the necessary preliminary logistic arrangements with the Secretariat, using the existing coordination mechanisms of the United Nations system.

## III. Summary of the outcomes of the consultations

9. The main outcome of the consultations undertaken by the President of the High-level Committee and the proposed nature and objectives, themes, venue, date and modalities, as well as the necessary considerations, with respect to the holding of the Conference, are summarized below.

### A. Nature and objectives of the Conference

10. The Conference should assess progress made, reaffirm goals and commitments, share best practices and lessons learned and identify obstacles and constraints encountered, actions and initiatives needed to overcome them and

important measures for further implementation as well as new challenges and emerging issues.

11. The Conference should be expected to provide an opportunity for policymakers to strategize on how best to tap into the rapidly growing capacities in the South and to harness the present momentum of South-South cooperation towards reaching internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, across the South. South-South cooperation offers policymakers and development practitioners a vital option to be considered in formulating national and regional development plans.

12. The Conference should be held at the ministerial, or similarly high, level, with the possible participation of Heads of State or Government, special representatives or other high-level representatives being encouraged.

13. Non-governmental organizations and business-sector entities should also be invited to participate in the Conference and its preparatory process, in accordance with the rules and procedures of the General Assembly, giving particular attention to the accreditation procedures and modalities of participation.

## B. Proposed theme and sub-themes for the Conference

14. The Conference should provide an opportunity to further clarify and distil the concept of South-South cooperation as an action-oriented modality through which to fight poverty and promote human development within the emerging world order, where developing countries are beginning to play major roles in areas such as trade, investment and finance. In this context, it is proposed that the Conference should have one overarching theme: "South-South cooperation for equitable development in the twenty-first century", with the following sub-themes:

(a) The changing landscape and dynamism in the global South and the role of South-South solidarity and cooperation towards achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration,[b] in order to engender a more inclusive globalization;

(b) South-South cooperation, including triangular cooperation, in the spheres of economic and sustainable development (for example, trade and investment; science and technology, especially information and communications technology; agriculture and food security; and environment and energy, including new and renewable sources of energy, as well as climate change, etc.);

(c) South-South development cooperation and humanitarian assistance, including triangular cooperation, in achieving the Millennium Development Goals, particularly poverty eradication and achievement of full and productive employment, and disaster management;

(d) South-South cooperation, including triangular cooperation, in social and other areas (for example, education and culture; health and social services, especially with respect to HIV/AIDS and malaria; migration and remittances; tourism and the creative economy; gender empowerment; and the role of the media in development).

[b] See General Assembly resolution 55/2.

## C. Venue and date of the Conference

15. Following the previous host country's withdrawal of its offer to host the Conference, there were informal indications of other possible offers to host the Conference. The President of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation consulted with interested Member States and the Bureau of the Committee regarding which would serve as the host country. Following the consultations, the President of the Committee recommended that the General Assembly accept the kind offer of the Government of Kenya to host the Conference in Nairobi.

16. In order to allow adequate time for both the Secretariat and the host country to make all the necessary preparations so as to ensure the success of the Conference, and taking into account the calendar of other United Nations conferences and meetings scheduled in 2009, it is proposed that the High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation be held in Nairobi, from 22 to 24 June 2009.

17. Bearing in mind the preceding paragraph, the General Assembly may wish to consider postponing the sixteenth session of the High-level Committee, currently scheduled to be held from 2 to 5 June 2009, until November 2009, and adjusting the duration of the High-level Committee session, as appropriate, in the light of the outcome of the High-level United Nations Conference.

## D. Modalities of the Conference

18. The Conference should include plenary meetings and a number of interactive multi-stakeholder round tables based on the overarching theme and the sub-themes proposed in paragraph 14 above.

19. The preparation and organization of the Conference should make full use of the existing institutional arrangements for reviewing the implementation of the outcomes of major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields.

20. The General Assembly may wish to request that the President of the High-level Committee, on the basis of the consultations with Member States, propose a programme of work, taking into account relevant meetings scheduled for 2009 and their expected outcomes, including necessary consultations in the identified thematic areas.

## E. Financing of the Conference

21. In accordance with the relevant rules and practices established by the General Assembly for organizing similar events including the participation of all Member States, observers, and intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations that have been accredited to participate in such events, as well as other relevant participants, the United Nations will normally cover, within available resources, those costs that would have been incurred if such an event had been held at United Nations Headquarters. These would normally entail the preparation of conference documents, including background documents; simultaneous

interpretations in all six working languages of the United Nations; and the salaries of translators, interpreters and a core of Secretariat staff directly associated to the preparation and organization of the Conference.

22. As it is a customary practice, the host Government would normally be expected to bear the costs of the Conference incurred as a result of its being held outside United Nations Headquarters. These would normally entail the provision of conference rooms and facilities; working spaces for the Conference secretariat and delegates, including computers and other office equipment; travel and daily subsistence allowances for interpreters and translators as well as the Secretariat's core support staff, at the prevailing standard United Nations rate; and local transportation for all participants from hotels to the Conference sites, as well as other related items, provided at the discretion of the host Government.

23. In order to ensure the broadest possible participation, especially by the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States, all Member States and other relevant stakeholders in a position to do so should be encouraged to consider supporting the participation of these countries, including by making voluntary contributions through the United Nations Fund for South-South Cooperation.

## IV. Preparations for and organization of the Conference

24. It is proposed that the Secretariat should prepare a comprehensive report, consistent with the overarching theme of the Conference, highlighting the new dynamism and trends in South-South cooperation, and the progress that has been made by the international community in advancing such cooperation since the adoption of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action. Such a document should be presented in the form of a report of the Secretary-General on the state of South-South cooperation. A concept paper should also be prepared for each of the sub-themes of the Conference. In addition, all Member States, as well as other participating partners, are encouraged to prepare their own national reports on South-South and triangular cooperation for submission to the Conference, on a voluntary basis.

25. All United Nations organizations, specialized agencies and regional commissions, as well as funds and programmes, should provide their inputs towards preparation by the Secretariat of the various conference documents proposed in paragraph 24 above and assist the Secretariat in the organization of the main Conference as well as relevant thematic discussions, in coordination with the Secretariat. As necessary and appropriate, relevant bodies among them are also encouraged to organize regional, sectoral or theme-specific meetings prior to the Conference, at their own cost. In this connection, the President of the High-level Committee and/or his designated representative(s) may undertake necessary consultations with these bodies and entities.

26. To ensure the success of the Conference, it is further proposed that the President of the High-level Committee be assisted by an expanded Bureau of the High-level Committee, the designation of whose members should reflect equitable representation from among the regional groups within the United Nations, and whose main task would also include the preparation of a draft declaration and plan of action, based on consultations with all Member States and other relevant partners.

27. The Conference should result in an intergovernmentally agreed outcome, namely, the aforementioned declaration and plan of action. In this regard:

(a) There should be summaries of the plenary meetings and the round-table discussions, which should be included in the report of the Conference;

(b) Overall, the outcomes of the Conference should be concise, action-oriented and practical;

(c) The Conference should result in the provision of enhanced resources for the United Nations Fund for South-South Cooperation.

## V. Recommendation

28. The General Assembly may wish to endorse the proposed nature, date, objectives, modalities and organizational arrangements for the High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation as described in the present report.

United Nations A/63/742–S/2009/115

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
26 February 2009

Original: English

**General Assembly**
**Sixty-third session**
Agenda item 21
**Question of Cyprus**

**Security Council**
**Sixty-fourth year**

## Letter dated 25 February 2009 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter dated 24 February 2009, addressed to you by Kemal Gökeri, Representative of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (see annex).

I will be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 21, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Baki **İlkin**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

09-25091 (E) 040309

## Annex to the letter dated 25 February 2009 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to refer to the letter dated 6 February 2009, addressed to you by the Greek Cypriot representative and circulated as a document of the General Assembly and of the Security Council (A/63/711-S/2009/81), which yet again contains well-known allegations of violations of "international air traffic regulations and the national airspace of the Republic of Cyprus", and to bring to your kind attention the following:

As stated in our previous communications addressed to you, habitually repeated allegations by the Greek Cypriot side of so-called "airspace violations" are totally unfounded and are rejected in toto by our authorities. The present allegations do not merit a detailed reply as they are of a similar nature. However, I wish to emphasize, once again, that flights within the sovereign airspace and flight information region of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus take place with the full knowledge and consent of the appropriate authorities of the State. The Greek Cypriot administration in South Cyprus has no jurisdiction or right of say over flights within the national airspace of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. Furthermore, it should be emphasized that allegations of so-called violations of air traffic regulations are invalid, as the civil aviation authority of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus is the only competent authority to provide air traffic and aeronautical information services.

The Greek Cypriot administration should be reminded, once again, that its counterpart is, and has always been, the Turkish Cypriot side, not Turkey. I also deem it imperative to point out, once again, that the attitude demonstrated by the Greek Cypriot representatives in their constant repetition of false claims is nothing more than rhetoric, which unfortunately wastes the precious time and energy of the international community.

Lastly, I would like to put on record once again that the Turkish Cypriot side is ready and doing its best to achieve a settlement in the form of a new partnership which will be in line with the established United Nations parameters and body of work. Bizonality, political equality of the two peoples, the equal status of the two constituent states and the continuation of Turkey's effective guarantee will constitute the parameters for a solution to the Cyprus problem. Removal of the existing isolations imposed on Turkish Cypriots and equal treatment of the two sides by the international community will surely contribute positively to the efforts towards reaching a comprehensive settlement in Cyprus.

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 21, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) M. Kemal **Gökeri**
Representative
Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus

United Nations A/63/743

General Assembly

Distr.: General
27 February 2009

Original: English

**Sixty-third session**
Agenda items 118 and 132

**Programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009**

**Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations**

# Information and communications technology, disaster recovery and business continuity for the United Nations: arrangements for the secondary data centre at Headquarters

## Revised estimates relating to the programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009 under Section 28D and Section 36

## Report of the Secretary-General

*Summary*

In its resolution 63/262 (sect. IV, para. 11), the General Assembly decided not to approve the proposal of the Secretary-General for a new secondary data centre as a result of the unsuitability of the proposed Long Island City site (see A/62/477) and requested the Secretary-General to report at the first part of its resumed sixty-third session on the risk mitigation measures to be taken during the relocation of the primary data centre to the North Lawn. In the same resolution, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to present a new proposal for a secondary data centre, including a proposal on cost-sharing arrangements (sect. IV, para. 19).

The present report responds to the above decisions of the General Assembly and addresses the request of the Assembly to the Secretary-General to consolidate systems in central data centres in order to strengthen disaster recovery and business continuity (resolution 63/262, sect. IV, para. 2).

In the context of the present report, the Secretary-General proposes that the Secretariat lease a commercial data centre facility, starting 1 July 2009, and obtain the services of the International Computing Centre, which would install new information and communications technology (ICT) equipment in this ready-to-use

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facility, and migrate all systems from the current secondary data centre in the DC2 Building to the leased facility by 1 November 2009, in time to provide a reliable backup during the relocation of the primary data centre. The Secretariat is to retain the data centre in the DC2 Building in working condition throughout the move in order to mitigate the risk of disruption to ICT services and the impact on the construction schedule of the capital master plan. The duration of the lease of the new facility is intended to run from 1 July 2009 to December 2011. This option of leasing a commercial data centre facility also allows for flexibility in adjusting to changes in scope and offers, under the present conditions, a viable solution for the secondary data centre for United Nations Headquarters in the short term.

The resources required for the new secondary data centre comprise: (a) a non-recurrent requirement related to the setting up of the new systems, (b) recurrent expenditures for managing the data centre operations, including equipment and related maintenance, and (c) recurrent expenditures for the lease of the facility, including power and cooling. The total costs, estimated in the amount of $25,737,500, are to be cost-shared between the programme budget and the peacekeeping support account.

The proposals for a permanent solution for the secondary data centre for United Nations Headquarters will be presented prior to the biennium 2012-2013, duly addressing requests by the General Assembly in its resolution 63/262 with regard to reducing the size of secondary data centres and re-engineering departmental applications with a view to the predominant use of enterprise data centres.

# I. Introduction

1. In his report on information and communications technology security, disaster recovery and business continuity for the United Nations, the Secretary-General outlined the urgent requirement to increase the size of the United Nations Headquarters secondary data centre and mitigate the potential risks under the capital master plan transition (A/62/477, para. 97). The United Nations Federal Credit Union (UNFCU) Building in Long Island City was initially identified as an attractive option for a secondary data centre as it would allow for: the consolidation of data centres; access to a lower-rent area along with the freeing up of existing office spaces for United Nations business needs; cooperative arrangements with New York-based funds and programmes; and improvements to tier 1 disaster recovery and business continuity capability and scalability.

2. The General Assembly did not consider the above report during its sixty-second session. Given the pressing need to proceed with setting up the secondary data centre in the new location, the Secretary-General, in a note dated 5 June 2008 (A/C.5/62/29, annex), requested the Assembly to take note of the need for the Secretariat to enter into commitments not exceeding $13.2 million to meet the associated costs relating to establishment of the alternate Long Island City data centre, in order to continue to make progress on the capital master plan.

3. With the provisioning of temporary funding mentioned above, a detailed analysis of the UNFCU Building for the Long Island City data centre was undertaken with the assistance of the contractors for the capital master plan. The analysis revealed, however, that the cost would be much higher than originally estimated, due to the need for structural reinforcements, fire protection and major upgrades to the electrical infrastructure. On 25 September 2008, the Secretariat decided that it was not in the best interest of the Organization to pursue the option of locating a secondary data centre in the UNFCU Building in Long Island City.

4. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, in its report of 16 October 2008 (A/63/487 and Corr.1 and 2), noted that the Long Island City site was no longer being pursued and stated that the General Assembly was no longer required to take any action on the resources requested. The Committee recommended that the Assembly request the Secretary-General to submit a new proposal for a secondary data centre for the United Nations Headquarters in New York, including detailed justification on the costs already incurred in connection with the Long Island City site (ibid., para. 83).

5. The General Assembly, in its resolution 63/262 of 24 December 2008, decided not to approve the proposal of the Secretary-General for a new secondary data centre at that stage and requested him to report at the first part of its resumed sixty-third session on the risk mitigation measures to be taken during the relocation of the primary data centre to the North Lawn. The Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to consolidate systems in central data centres in order to strengthen disaster recovery and business continuity, to minimize the size of local primary and secondary data centres and to ensure that the Secretariat would use enterprise data centres rather than local data centres as far as possible.

## II. The problem

6. The current secondary data centre at United Nations Headquarters is located in the DC2 Building, which has limited capacity for both cooling and electrical power. Furthermore, there is no emergency power generator support at that location in the event of a power failure on the public utility grid. When the cooling problem was first identified during the biennium 2000-2001, additional cooling was installed. However, with the continuing increase in demand for information and communications technology (ICT) services, additional electrical and heat loads generated in the data centre presented a high risk of failure, particularly during the summer months. The electrical infrastructure of the DC2 Building is near its maximum capacity, limiting the available alternatives for dealing with the problem. In the summer of 2008, the Information Technology Services Division was forced to shut down several backup systems in the DC2 data centre in order to mitigate problems associated with overheating. The stand-by servers for many systems such as the Integrated Management Information System (IMIS), the official document system (ODS) and the Operations Processing Integrated Control System (OPICS) (Treasury system) are inactive for that reason. The data for these systems is, however, being backed up to the data centre in the DC2 Building for disaster recovery purposes.

7. According to the current schedule for the capital master plan, the new North Lawn data centre site will be ready for occupation in November 2009. Due to the complexity and volume of applications currently being hosted in the primary data centre, it has been determined that relocating the data centre from the Secretariat Building to the North Lawn in one phase would be a high-risk option, given the risk it presents for disruption in the day-to-day operations of the Secretariat. Furthermore, this approach would also require a large financial outlay to cover the necessary ICT equipment and services.

8. To mitigate the risk and expenditure involved, the relocation plan envisages a phased approach, spanning four months, from November 2009 to February 2010. In the first phase, expected to be about six weeks, the North Lawn data centre will be equipped with core infrastructure equipment (network and ICT security) and with approximately 25 per cent of the server and storage capacity, to be funded from the $7,145,500 approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 63/262 (see sect. IV, paras. 21 and 22). These resources comprise of $5,716,400 to be funded from the regular budget to be met from resources appropriated under the programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009 and $1,429,100 from the support account. Within this capacity, approximately 25 per cent of the systems hosted in the current primary data centre will be relocated to the North Lawn data centre. When this relocation is successfully completed, the primary data centre equipment released through this initial relocation will be dismantled, moved and installed in the North Lawn data centre to facilitate the next phase of relocation of systems. This process will continue iteratively until all the systems have been relocated from the existing primary data centre to the North Lawn data centre.

9. During the relocation of systems from the primary data centre to the North Lawn data centre, as described in paragraph 8 above, in order to ensure uninterrupted service the secondary data centre will acquire the role of a primary data centre for the systems that are being relocated. However, because of its inadequate infrastructure facilities, especially the lack of emergency backup power,

the data centre in the DC2 Building poses a high risk to the continued provision of critical ICT services during the relocation of the primary data centre. If major systems, such as IMIS, e-mail, ODS or official United Nations websites, are disrupted, the Secretariat's operations could be seriously affected.

10. The current schedule for the capital master plan envisages that demolition work will be undertaken in the Secretariat Building from November 2009 onwards. While the contractors for the plan will take great care to avoid any damage or disruption to the infrastructure supporting the primary data centre in the Secretariat Building, the risks of major disruption to ICT services cannot be ruled out. Thus, a reliable secondary data centre is critical in order to mitigate the effects of any possible disruptions.

11. It should also be noted that if the existing primary data centre in the Secretariat Building is not vacated, as planned, by the end of March 2010, the implementation of the capital master plan project will be delayed resulting in a cost increase currently estimated at about $14,000,000 per month due to several costs associated with swing space leases and the resumption of construction activity after an interruption.

12. For the reasons outlined in the paragraphs above, it is necessary to ensure that a reliable and adequately equipped secondary data centre is fully operational by the end of October 2009. As explained in paragraph 6 above, the current secondary data centre in the DC2 Building cannot meet this requirement, nor can it be upgraded to meet this requirement.

## III. Proposed solutions

13. If the secondary data centre is to provide a reliable backup to the primary data centre it must be located away from the primary data centre, preferably in an area that uses power and communications links from a different utility grid. It cannot, however, be too far away since the costs of data transmission tend to increase with distance. In addition, the secondary data centre has to be within a 60-mile radius of the primary data centre at Headquarters. This physical distance limitation is imposed by the technology that is used for the replication of data from the primary data centre to the secondary data centre. The distance provides a safe margin within which it is possible to ensure that the data replicated to the secondary location can be recovered in full if the primary location is affected. Such technology is currently used for IMIS, security video and other mission-critical data.

14. In September 2008, when it was determined that the UNFCU Building in Long Island City was not suitable for the secondary data centre, the Secretariat undertook a search for alternate sites in which to build a data centre. Three sites, located in Wappingers Falls, New York, Brooklyn, New York, and Jersey City, New Jersey, were initially identified as potential sites. The Brooklyn and Jersey City sites were eventually discounted owing to concerns surrounding security, the costs involved and the amount of construction that would be required. The Wappingers Falls site appeared to be the most promising from the point of view of cost and availability. A preliminary feasibility study, undertaken in December 2008, confirmed that this site could represent a good long-term solution in terms of distance from the Secretariat, the space available and the quality of the utilities (power, cooling and telecommunications).

15. A more detailed follow-up study, also initiated in December 2008, could not be completed until in January 2009. On the basis of that study, it was estimated that the costs associated with the "fit-out" of the Wappingers Falls data centre facility, not including the cost of the necessary ICT equipment, would be approximately $24.4 million. More importantly, it became clear that the Wappingers Falls site would not be ready in time for the Secretariat's purpose, due to the lead-time for modifications to the facilities and the timing of consideration and approval of the current proposal by the General Assembly.

16. Independent of this development regarding the inability to build a data centre facility in time for the relocation of the primary data centre, the Secretariat also had to re-evaluate its strategy relating to the secondary data centre for Headquarters, in the light of the adoption of resolution 63/262 by the General Assembly. In section IV of that resolution, the Assembly established several important principles for managing disaster recovery and business continuity, notably the Assembly:

(a) Requested the consolidation of systems in central data centres and the minimization of the size of local primary and secondary data centres;

(b) Encouraged a unified approach to disaster recovery and business continuity, utilizing all available infrastructure to achieve economies of scale and cost efficiencies;

(c) Requested that the Secretary-General ensure the use of enterprise data centres rather than local data centres as far as possible;

(d) Encouraged application and data re-engineering where it supported the long-term goal of managing data recovery and business continuity in system-wide enterprise data centres and where, from a long-term perspective, it is more cost-effective than hosting them at a local data centre.

17. Cumulatively, the above principles established by the General Assembly in December 2008 pointed to a case for a smaller secondary data centre in Headquarters than originally planned, with the flexibility to reduce its size, over time, by re-engineering and migrating applications to enterprise data centres.

18. Since constructing a data centre was ruled out owing to the time constraint, and the case for a smaller data centre, with flexibility to shrink further, was strengthened by General Assembly resolution 63/262, the Secretariat undertook a market survey for commercial, "infrastructure-ready" data centre facilities, where it could immediately install and operate its own ICT equipment. These facilities already have raised floor, power and cooling. They can be made operational for the Secretariat's purposes by installing ICT equipment and telecommunication links between the facility and the Headquarters campus.

19. These data centre facilities are also available for a short period of time and afford the flexibility to scale their capacity up or down depending on the Secretariat's requirements. In this regard, the availability and the scalability of these commercial data centre facilities make them potentially feasible solutions for both the short-term and the long-term requirements.

**Timeline for implementation**

20. As mentioned earlier, the primary data centre has to be relocated from the Secretariat Building to the new North Lawn data centre in phases commencing from

1 November 2009. This includes about six weeks for setting up the initial ICT infrastructure in the North Lawn data centre. The relocation of systems will, therefore, effectively take place from mid-December 2009 to the end of February 2010.

21. The new secondary data centre needs, therefore, to be fully operational, including all systems that have to be relocated from the data centre in the DC2 Building, by the end of October 2009. Setting up the initial ICT infrastructure for this data centre is also estimated to take about six weeks. The relocation of systems from the DC2 data centre to the new secondary data centre is estimated to take about 10 weeks. The new secondary data centre facility must, therefore, be available for occupation by 1 July 2009.

22. For the above reasons, a commercial data centre facility must be identified and leased by 1 July 2009. This presents a very challenging timetable for all the associated procurement and negotiation processes to be completed, significantly increasing the risk that the deadline for the commissioning of the new secondary data centre cannot be met.

23. The timely procurement of ICT equipment is not anticipated to present difficulties due to the availability of systems contracts and reasonable lead times for delivery of equipment. However, the establishment of the necessary commercial telecommunication links to the new secondary data centre will also require some lead time and may pose a challenge if the site is not identified quickly.

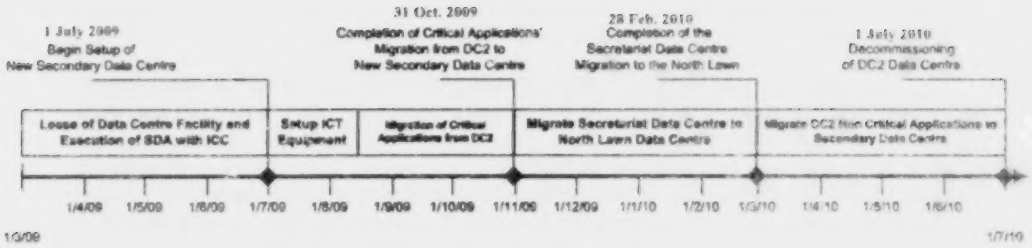
24. Noting the tight time schedule and the associated costs attached to any delays, the Secretariat plans to enter into a service delivery agreement with the International Computing Centre, under financial rule 105.16(a)(iii) on cooperation with other organizations of the United Nations system.

25. A number of risk mitigation strategies will be developed to ensure the organization achieves a best-value-for-money outcome from the International Computing Centre. First, the service delivery agreement process will be managed by the Procurement Division. Secondly, the Office of Information and Communications Technology will develop a robust statement of work, with clear deliverables, which the Procurement Division will use to benchmark estimates provided by the International Computing Centre.

26. Due to the significant costs of any delay in the relocation of the primary data centre, to the overall cost by the capital master plan, the Secretariat proposes to maintain the current secondary data centre in the DC2 Building in working condition throughout the entire relocation. This plan supersedes the earlier plan to vacate the data centre in the DC2 Building as early as possible and it will provide an additional level of risk mitigation in the event there are any delays in the schedule of the capital master plan or in setting up the new secondary data centre. It will also provide some flexibility in dealing with certain systems that prove difficult to relocate to the new secondary data centre. The Secretariat, therefore, plans to decommission the data centre in the DC2 Building only by the end of June 2010, allowing some time for relocating non-critical systems that could not be relocated within the time frame outlined in paragraph 20 above.

27. The above schedules for the various phases associated with the acquisition and commissioning of a new secondary data centre are graphically presented in figure I.

**Figure I**




# IV. Recommended solution and related resource requirements

28. The Secretariat proposes to lease a commercial "infrastructure-ready" data centre facility, with less capacity than originally envisaged, for the period from 1 July 2009 to 31 December 2011, with an option to extend the lease, if necessary. Such a lease, including space, power, cooling and racks, is estimated to cost $4,288,000 per year, in addition to an initial set-up charge of $350,000. For the period from 1 July 2009 to 31 December 2011, the lease would cost $11,070,000. As indicated earlier, such a lease is expected to provide the flexibility to increase or decrease capacity, with reasonable notice.

29. On the basis of the quantity and type of equipment to be installed and commissioned, it is estimated that a one-time cost for planning and installing all the equipment, including the operating systems software, would be $994,700. Once the operating systems software has been installed, all the applications in the data centre in the DC2 Building, both enterprise and departmental, have to be installed, configured, tested and tuned for performance in the new data centre. The effort involved in this is far more difficult to estimate than the commissioning of the new equipment, as it is dependent on the complexity of the applications. On the basis of an inventory of these applications and the classification of complexity into low, medium and high, the one-time cost for migrating the applications is estimated to be $1,000,000.

30. Currently, the Secretariat utilizes the International Computing Centre for many of the data centre operations in the primary and secondary data centres at United Nations Headquarters in New York and in the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, Italy. Consistent with General Assembly resolution 63/262 (sect. I, para. 6), in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to continue to utilize the services of the Centre in supporting the ICT activities of the United Nations, the Secretariat proposes to enter into a service delivery agreement with the Centre to manage the new secondary data centre from 1 July 2009.

31. Under the above-mentioned service delivering agreement, the International Computing Centre will provide the necessary equipment and services for running the new secondary data centre for an estimated annual amount of $5,445,800. This amount will be offset by a reduction of $627,800 annually in the current service delivery agreement for the data centre in the DC2 Building from July 2010 when the data centre is decommissioned. The estimated cost of the new agreement would be $12,672,800 for the period from 1 July 2009 to 31 December 2011.

32. The total estimated cost of the new secondary data centre for the period from July 2009 to December 2011 would be $25,737,500, broken down as shown in table 1.

Table 1

(Thousands of United States dollars)

| *Object of expenditure* | *2009* | *2010* | *2011* | *Total* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Non-recurrent expenditures | | | | |
| Contractual services | | | | |
| Commissioning equipment | 994.7 | | | **994.7** |
| Migrating applications | 1 000.0 | | | **1 000.0** |
| Recurrent expenditures | | | | |
| General operating expenses | | | | |
| Lease of data centre facility | 2 494.0 | 4 288.0 | 4 288.0 | **11 070.0** |
| Contractual services | | | | |
| Data centre equipment and services | 2 722.9 | 5 131.9 | 4 818.0 | **12 672.8** |
| **Total** | **7 211.6** | **9 419.9** | **9 106.0** | **25 737.5** |

33. A proposal for a permanent solution for the secondary data centre for United Nations Headquarters will be submitted during the biennium 2012-2013, duly addressing a number of requests in General Assembly resolution 63/262 related to reducing the size of secondary data centres, re-engineering departmental applications with a view to using enterprise data centres and improving business continuity. The cost-benefit of retaining the leased commercial data centre as a permanent solution for United Nations Headquarters will also be addressed in that context.

## V. Summary of resource requirements

34. About 20 per cent of the capacity in the existing primary data centre in the Secretariat building is utilized by peacekeeping operations. Accordingly, 20 per cent of the costs are met from the peacekeeping support account, while the remaining 80 per cent are financed from the regular budget.

35. The same cost-sharing arrangement is proposed for the new secondary data centre on the basis of the proportion of capacity used for peacekeeping and non-peacekeeping operations. The cost-sharing ratio will be reviewed again for the 2012-2013 biennium if the proportion of capacity used by peacekeeping operations changes due to the migration of systems to enterprise data centres.

36. Table 2 summarizes the resource requirements for the secondary data centre for the period from July 2009 to December 2011, based on the recommendation in paragraphs 34 and 35 above.

Table 2
(Thousands of United States dollars)

| | *Regular budget* | | *Peacekeeping budget* | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Object of expenditure* | *2008-2009* | *2010-2011* | *1 July 2009-30 June 2010* | *1 July 2010-30 June 2011* | *1 July 2011-31 Dec. 2011* | *Total* |
| General operating expenses | | | | | | |
| Rental of facilities | 1 995.2 | 6 860.8 | 927.6 | 857.6 | 428.8 | 11 070.0 |
| Contractual services | | | | | | |
| Commissioning equipment | 795.8 | 0 | 198.9 | 0 | 0 | 994.7 |
| Migrating applications | 800.0 | 0 | 200.0 | 0 | 0 | 1 000.0 |
| Data centre equipment and services | 2 178.3 | 7 959.9 | 1 057.8 | 995.0 | 481.8 | 12 672.8 |
| **Total** | **5 769.3** | **14 820.7** | **2 384.3** | **1 852.6** | **910.6** | 25 737.5 |

37. The recurring costs for the lease of the facilities, including space, power and cooling, is estimated to be $11,070,000 for the period from July 2009 to December 2011. A sum of $1,995,000 will be required under contractual services to cover the non-recurring costs for setting up ICT equipment and systems in the new secondary data centre. The recurring cost for the provision of ICT equipment and services, including maintenance, is estimated at $12,673,000 for the period from July 2009 to December 2011.

# VI. Actions to be taken by the General Assembly

38. **The General Assembly is requested:**

(a) **To approve the total estimated cost of the project, estimated at $25,737,500;**

(b) **To approve the proposed cost-sharing arrangement for the new secondary data centre;**

(c) **To approve the additional resource requirements for the biennium 2008-2009 of $3,774,100 under Section 36, Office of Information and Communications Technology, and $1,995,200 under Section 28D, Office of Central Support Services;**

(d) **To note that the future remaining requirements in the estimated amount of $14,820,700 would be considered in the context of the proposed programme budget for the 2010-2011 biennium;**

(e) **To note the Secretariat strategy of entering into a service delivery agreement with the International Computing Centre, under financial rule 105.16(a)(iii) and securing a leasing agreement to accommodate an "infrastructure-ready" data centre facility;**

(f) **To approve the additional resource requirements of $2,384,300 from the peacekeeping support account for the period from 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010;**

(g) **To note that the future remaining requirements in an estimated amount of $1,852,600 will be included in the peacekeeping support account requirements for the period from 1 July 2010 to 30 June 2011 and that an estimated amount of $910,600 will be included in the requirements for the period from 1 July 2011 to 30 June 2012.**

United Nations A/63/744

General Assembly

Distr.: General
2 March 2009

Original: English

Sixty-third session
Agenda items 40 and 118

Report of the Economic and Social Council

Programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009

# Financing of the core diplomatic training activities of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research

## Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the report of the Secretary-General on the financing of the core diplomatic training activities of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) (A/63/592). The Committee also had before it the related report of the Board of Auditors.[1] During its consideration of the report of the Secretary-General, the Advisory Committee met with the Executive Director of the Institute and representatives of the Secretary-General, who provided additional information and clarifications.

2. In his report, the Secretary-General described the recent reform process at UNITAR and noted that the organizational structure of the Institute had undergone a rationalization process to ensure proper lines of responsibility and accountability through a more vertical structure, including regular performance evaluations and systematic reviews of job descriptions (A/63/592, paras. 3-8). The Advisory Committee was informed that a central element of the reform was the establishment of the Partnerships and Resource Mobilization Section, which has developed a long-term strategy for generating voluntary funding, both earmarked and non-earmarked. UNITAR has also addressed all but one of the outstanding recommendations of the Board of Auditors (see A/63/5/Add.4, para. 53). **The Advisory Committee commends UNITAR for the progress it has made in the reform of its overall operations.**

3. As shown in table 1 of the Secretary-General's report, there has been a steady increase in voluntary contributions over the last four bienniums, from $16.6 million

[1] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-third Session, Supplement No. 5D* (A/63/5/Add.4).

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during the biennium 2002-2003 to an estimated $35.1 million in 2008-2009. The Advisory Committee welcomes the fact that earmarked contributions have doubled in size, from approximately $15 million in 2002-2003 to an estimated $30 million in 2008-2009. In contrast, however, non-earmarked contributions have remained at a modest level increasing from approximately $581,000 in 2002-2003 to an estimated $850,000 in 2008-2009. Upon enquiry, the Committee was informed that, since 2007, seven countries had commenced or resumed their non-earmarked contributions to the Institute. **The Advisory Committee welcomes this development.**

4. The Secretary-General reported that, in previous years, core diplomatic training was funded through voluntary, non-earmarked contributions, but that since the decline in such contributions the Institute had pursued other funding sources to meet core diplomatic training costs (see A/63/592, paras. 19-24). As indicated in paragraph 22 of the report, the use of programme support costs from unrelated special-purpose grants to cover the costs of core diplomatic training will cease. This is a central part of the reform initiatives endorsed by the UNITAR Board of Trustees in May 2008 and is in line with the recommendations on strengthening accountability and adopting better business practices of the High-level Panel on System-wide Coherence.

5. The Secretary-General noted in his report that the total projected cost of core diplomatic training for the biennium 2008-2009 is $2.4 million. Of that amount, it is expected that $600,000 would be covered by voluntary contributions, and another $600,000 would be financed from special-purpose grants for core diplomatic training activities (see table below), leaving an estimated shortfall of $1.2 million. In this connection, the Secretary-General noted that only a small amount of funding for core diplomatic training is provided by Member States. Upon request, the Advisory Committee was provided with an updated version of table 5 of the Secretary-General's report showing special-purpose grant donors and income for 2008-2009 for core diplomatic training.

**Special-purpose grant donors and income for 2008-2009 for core diplomatic training**

(United States dollars, status: 1 February 2009)

| *Donor* | *Income* |
|---|---|
| International Organization of la Francophonie | 93 182.93 |
| South Africa, Department of Foreign Affairs | 60 000.00 |
| Mexico, Ministry of Foreign Affairs | 20 000.00 |
| United Nations Population Fund | 53 500.00 |
| MacArthur Foundation | 196 000.00 |
| Olof Palmes Minnesfond, Sweden | 154 067.00 |
| Spain, Ministry of Foreign Affairs | 76 000.00 |
| **Total** | **652 749.93** |

6. The Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that the Institute had taken a number of measures to address the current financial shortfalls, including a hiring freeze of three Director-level positions in the Support Services Department, the Training Department and the Research Department. The Committee was informed

that this would affect some elements of the reform package, such as the establishment of the committee to ensure quality control of training materials, ensuring synergies between UNITAR representational offices and programmes at UNITAR headquarters, and the introduction of cost-cutting efforts across departments. Other measures included the reduction of training activities in Nairobi and at the regional commissions headquartered in Bangkok, Beirut and Santiago. **The Advisory Committee welcomes the Institute's prudent approach to reducing costs and trusts that every effort will be made to ensure that the measures taken will not adversely affect mandated activities.**

7. The Advisory Committee notes from the annex to the report that the number of participants in core diplomatic training events ranges from 4 to 297. No information is provided on the associated costs for each activity. The Committee further notes from table 3 of the report that expenditure for core diplomatic training has more than doubled since the biennium 2002-2003. Upon enquiry, the Committee was informed that the number of participants for core diplomatic training courses increased from 1,436 participants in 2004 to 2,418 participants in 2008 and that the number of training days increased from 54 training days in 2004 to 130 training days in 2008.

8. **The Advisory Committee recognizes the importance of the core diplomatic training and recommends approval, on an exceptional basis for the biennium 2010-2011, of an annual subvention in the amount of $600,000, or a total of $1.2 million for the biennium, on the understanding that the Institute will intensify its efforts to raise funds for the programme and undertake a prioritization exercise. It is the Committee's opinion that it would be useful for UNITAR to undertake such an exercise in order to prioritize the activities of the core diplomatic training programme with a view to aligning activities with available resources and utilizing those resources as effectively as possible.**

9. **The Advisory Committee also points out that the training services provided by the Institute are utilized not only by the United Nations, but also by United Nations specialized agencies, funds and programmes. The Committee therefore recommends that the Institute explore possibilities for cost-sharing for the training services provided to these entities.**

10. **The Advisory Committee requests that the Institute report, in its proposed programme budget for 2012-2013, on results achieved with regard to fund-raising for core diplomatic training activities, the above-mentioned prioritization exercise and possible cost-sharing arrangements.**

11. As to the proposal in paragraph 33 of the report concerning the amendment of paragraph 2 of article VIII of the statute of UNITAR to include a subvention from the regular budget, the Advisory Committee recalls General Assembly resolutions 1827 (XVII), 1934 (XVIII), 42/197 and 47/227, in which the Assembly affirmed the voluntary nature of the funding of UNITAR. **Bearing in mind its recommendations and observations in the paragraphs above, the Advisory Committee recommends against approval of the proposal in the report of the Secretary-General.**